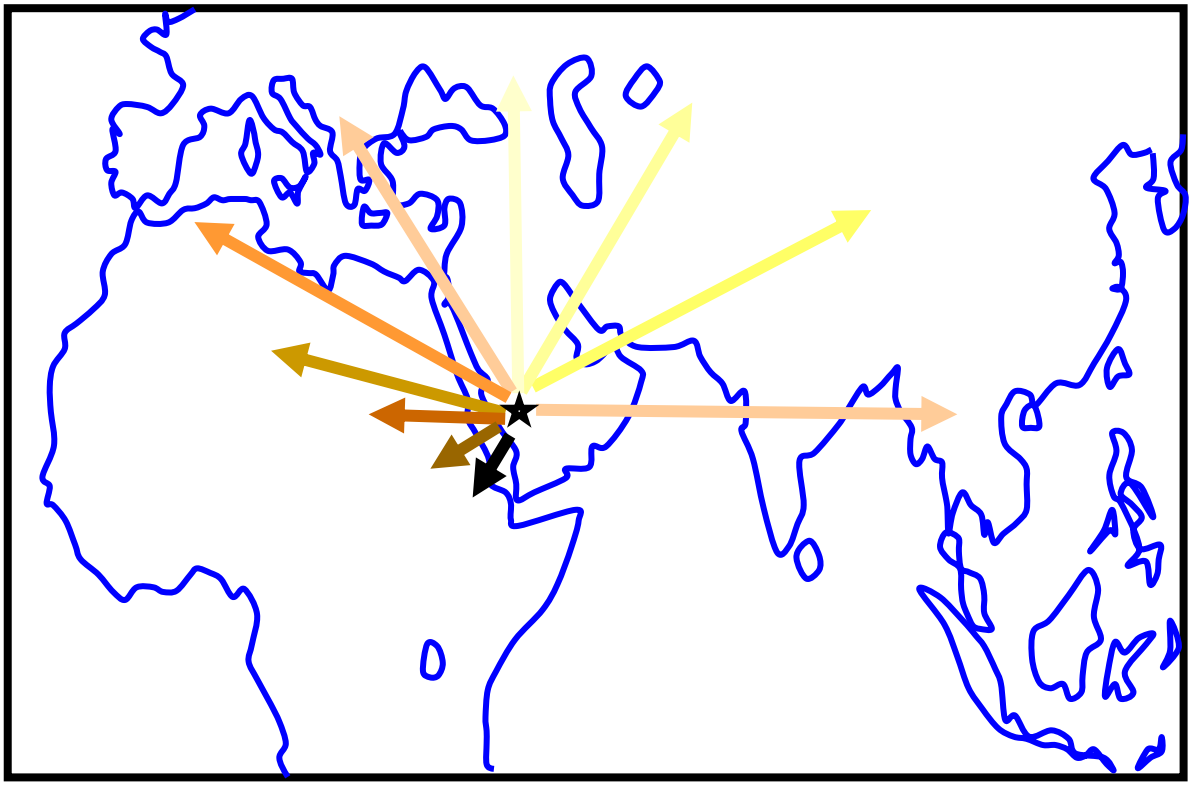
HISTORY OF THE ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

The Islamic civilization has had major impact on the world for the past 14 centuries. It began in Arabia in the seventh century of our era and expanded rapidly. It had reached Spain in the west and India in the east within one hundred years. Multitude of dynasties followed in succession. Some of which were global while others were regional. After the death of the prophet Muhammad in 632, a period of 30 years saw the onset of the expansion phenomenon under the four rightly-guided khalifs from the city of Medina in Arabia. A civil war broke out and created the initial chasm between the main Islamic factions (Sunnis, Shia and Ibadhi). The Ummayad dynasty was led by Arabs with Persian and Byzantine expertise and lasted for almost one century from its capital of Damascus in Syria.

The Abbasid dynasty followed and focused power in the hands of Islamized Persians for the first two centuries from its capital of Baghdad in Iraq. This period is referred to as the golden age of the Islamic civilization. Loss of central authority weakened this dynasty to local war lords and regional dynasties. The majority of the Muslim population was Sunni while the ruling elites became Shia in the Fatimid and the Buwayid dynasties of the tenth century. Sunni rule was re-established after that. Turkish peoples of Central Asia increasingly penetrated the Middle East first as soldiers then in positions of power in the various local dynasties. From the twelfth century on, the history of the Islamic civilization was heavily affected by the Turks.

The Mongol invasion of the mid-thirteenth century was devastating to the Middle East. It ended what little was left of the Abbasid dynasty and the privileged position of Baghdad. The center of influence moved to Cairo in Egypt which was not invaded by the Mongols. The Mongols conquered the Islamic lands but did not have enough people and experience to rule. They depended heavily on Turkish expertise. An irony of history is that the Mongols themselves entered the fold of Islam and ended up giving a tremendous momentum to the Islamic civilization. The Mamluk dynasty in Egypt centralized power in the hands of the Turkish mercenaries in the military.

The sixteenth century saw the development of three contemporary dynasties in the Islamic lands: the Ottomans in the Middle East and North Africa, the Saffavids in Persia and the Mughals in India. These are referred to as the Gunpowder Empires.

Advances in ship building technology brought European powers to the Middle East and all over the world in the sixteenth century. Spanish and Portuguese competition diverted trade from the Middle East and the Mediterranean basin to the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic. The Dutch dominated the oceans as far as Southeast Asia in the seventeenth century. This along with overwhelming technological advances weakened the Middle East and strengthened Europe.

European powers expanded and colonized most of Africa and Asia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Gunpowder Empires were no match and could not stop European expansion (the British, the French and the Russians) from taking over most of

the Islamic territories. Abundant raw materials and cheap labor from the colonies enforced European advantage. Dominance of the Western civilization sent the Islamic civilization into a long-lasting slumber.

The Islamic civilization is sometime referred to as the middle civilization since it is middle in time between the dark middles ages and the renaissance of modern times. It is also middle in geography since it was based in the Middle East. Islam is sometime likened to a river that takes the color of the terrain in which it flows. It does not attempt to change cultures forcefully but rather appeals to the innate desire for change in most people. This desire is strong for those who are oppressed or under foreign rule.

In modern times, Islam is very much center stage in many parts of the world. The West is discovering Islam and its extremist wing the hard way. It was not prepared for this “clash of civilizations” but is catching on quickly.

Chapter 2: BEFORE ISLAM

THE MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East is the cradle of the early civilizations. The Mesopotamian civilization in Iraq saw the development of agriculture, early form of writing (cuneiform) and crude form of currency as far back as 5000 BC. The Egyptian civilization saw the building of the pyramids under the pharaohs and the development of the hieroglyphic writing. The Egyptian, Greek, Roman and Persian civilizations all prospered in this region and around the Mediterranean Sea. The Middle East is also the birthplace of the monotheistic religions. Judaism started with Moses around 1,500 BC and Christianity with Jesus some 2,000 years ago. Between these two eras, a thriving Jewish civilization developed with Jerusalem as its capital. This included the kingdom of David and his son Solomon in the 10^{th} century BC. These were later split into a southern part called Judeah with Jerusalem as its capital and a northern part called Samaria.

There were incessant wars between the Persian and the Greek (and later Roman) empires. In 586 BC Nebuchadnezzar, a Persian king, captured Jerusalem and took the Jews into captivity in Babylon in Mesopotamia. Decades later, these were allowed to return. Alexander the Great (356-323BC) of Macedonia conquered Persia and took Greek influence eastward to Asia Minor and southward to Egypt and Syria.

Some of the languages used in the Middle East were Semitic like Assyrian (a form of Aramaic) and Babylonian. Aramaic became the language of commerce in the Fertile Crescent, but also in Persia and Egypt. Hebrew and Arabic were also widely used in the region. The Fertile Crescent is formed of the Nile Delta (and Upper Egypt) to the west, Syria and Palestine to the north and the fertile region between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers in Iraq to the east.

RELIGIONS

Christianity was not accepted by the Romans ruling Jerusalem right away. In 135 AD, the Romans sent a large part of the Jewish population into exile. The Jews were suspected of collaborating with the Persians. Christianity became the state religion for the Romans when Emperor Constantine (311-337) converted. At the end of the fourth century of our era, the Roman Empire was split into the Western Empire ruled from Rome and the Eastern Empire ruled from Constantinople. The Western Empire was caught up in a series of Barbarian invasions and ultimately ceased to exist. The Huns were a group of nomadic (so called Barbarian) pastoral people who appeared from Central Asia and invaded Europe; they established long-lasting kingdoms. Barbarian kings ruled in France, England, Germany, Spain and Italy. The Western Roman Empire lost any influence over these kingdoms. From the fourth century onward, Roman influence moved to the Eastern Roman (also called Byzantine) Empire which controlled Egypt, Syria, Anatolia, Greece as well as the North African coast. The empire was more Greek than Roman. The language of the ruling elite was Greek in centers like Antioch in Syria and Alexandria in

Egypt. Local languages in use were Syriac (a form of Aramaic) in Syria, Armenian in Eastern Anatolia and Coptic in Egypt.

Zoroastrianism was the main Persian religion. It was based on fire worship and was focused on a battle between good and evil. The capital of the Persian Empire was Ctesiphon near Baghdad. Persian influence reached to the east as far as India and to the west at times as far as the Mediterranean. The Sassanid Persian dynasty (which started in the third century AD) claimed Syria, Palestine and even Egypt at times. Persian influence also included the Persian Gulf and the southern coast of Arabia such as Yemen. A Persian called Mani founded a religion consisting of a mix of Zoroastrianism and Christianity during the same period.

TRADE ROUTES

The Romans wanted to keep trade routes open between the east and the west. The Roman Empire was in need of silk from China, ivory from East Africa, spices from India and Southeast Asia, etc. There were two main trade routes: a northern route from China that crossed the Turkish territories in the Central Asian steppes and a southern route through the Indian Ocean. Both routes avoided Persian territories. The northern route was difficult and turned out to be less viable. The southern route became the most used route. Goods would come by sea from Southeast Asia and from East Africa to ports on the Red Sea or on the Indian Ocean along the coast of Arabia. These would get transported by caravan to "Greater Syria" which was a bustling trading center. These would then make their way to Rome and other European capitals by boat through the Mediterranean Sea.

Goods were coming from Africa and from Asia. The Roman and Persian Empires were in constant warfare. The caravan trade included spices from India, silk and jade from China, gold and ivory from East Africa and hides and brocade from Yemen. Such goods would then make their way to Constantinople, Rome and other European capitals in the Roman Empire by boat across the Mediterranean Sea.

For the first four centuries AD, both Arabs (in Arabia) and Turks (in Central Asia) were outside of both Roman and Persian influences. They were desert and steppe peoples living at the outer fringes of civilization and were of no interest to these two powers which did not bother invading or occupying their territories. Instead, they tried to keep them allied through trade and though small buffer states such as the city of Petra between Arabia and Jordan in the Roman territory. The fifth century AD was a period of peace between the Romans and the Persians. During that period, both empires lost complete interest in Arabia. Romans lost interest even in the caravan trade through Arabia since more direct routes farther north could safely get rather close to Persian territories. Arabia sank into a dark period whereby towns were abandoned and agriculture became inexistent. Arabs returned to their nomadic way of life. When the Romans and Persians resumed their enmity and constant state of warfare in the sixth century AD, the caravan trade through Arabia flourished again. During that period, some Jewish tribes settled in Arabia attracted by the lucrative caravan trade. Some of them were skilled goldsmiths and gold jewelry was in high demand in Roman society.

ARABIA

The city of Mecca in Arabia was a major hub in the caravan trade. It was under Persian influence through the Indian Ocean, under Roman influence through the north and under the influence of yet another local power, Ethiopia across the Red Sea. Yemen in the southern coast of Arabia was the object of a major power struggle between the Persians and the Ethiopians. The Ethiopians followed a branch of Christianity and were therefore allied with the Romans against the Persians. Ethiopians had become a strong trading and military power with ships sailing all the way to India and with control over some Arabian ports. An Ethiopian expedition even attacked the city of Mecca in 507 which was a Yemeni trading post on the caravan route to the north. The Ethiopians were defeated and the Persians ended up controlling the Yemeni coast. There was strong Jewish influence in Yemen. The Jews, however, had strong alliance with the Persians against the Ethiopians and the Romans. The Christian faith was almost not represented at all in Arabia except for a limited bastion at Najran near the border with Yemen.

The sixth century AD saw the weakening of all powers in the region. The Ethiopians left Arabia completely. The Persians had internal struggle at home and lost direct interest in Arabia. The Romans kept their hands-off policy. Arabian tribes controlled the caravan trade entirely. These had acquired war tactics and much weaponry to feed many tribal wars. Since the caravan trade was their livelihood, they managed to establish a period of truce during the “sacred” months of the year. They also learned the skills of writing and developed an Arabic script. Their poetry describing their ethos of courage, hospitality and strong allegiance to family and tribe could now be written down and shared with others. Mecca housed the pagan idols and was at the center of regional fairs to which tribes came from all over Arabia.

Chapter 3: LIFE OF THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

MUHAMMAD, THE MAN

Muhammad was born in Mekka in Arabia in 570. He was a member of the Quraish tribe. His father Abdullah died before his birth. His mother Amina also died when Muhammad was six years old. His paternal grandfather Abdul Muttalib who was one of the leaders of the Quraish tribe ruling Mekka took care of him for a couple of years. When his grandfather died, his uncle Abu Talib took care of him. Muhammad helped take care of his uncle's cattle in his teenage years. In his twenties, Muhammad got involved in his uncle's caravan trade.

Mekka was at the crossroads of a healthy caravan trade bringing goods from Red Sea and Indian Ocean ports and taking them to Jerusalem in Greater Syria.

Muhammad got married at age 25 with a wealthy widow called Khadija who was 15 years older than him. They would have 7 children (3 boys who all died in infancy and 4 girls who all lived full lives). In his thirties, Muhammad started pondering upon the ills of the society of that time. Oppression, poverty, state of constant tribal warfare, gambling and drinking, poor treatment of women, lack of individual rights and of basic respect were getting to him. He started isolating himself in a cave overlooking the city of Mekka for days. At age 40, he received the first revelation through Angel Gabriel. His wife, his cousin, his adoptive son Ali and his best friend Abu Bakr accepted his message right away.

MUHAMMAD, THE PROPHET

For a period of three years, Muhammad kept his new mission secret. After that, he invited members of his family and close friends into the new faith of Islam with not much success. When the leaders of the Quraish tribe learned about the new message, they started persecuting the small number of Muslims. Muhammad asked some of his followers to migrate to Abyssinia (across the Red Sea) where there was a fair Christian king. Persecution persisted all through Muhammad's forties. It culminated in an all-out boycott of Muhammad and all his family members to an area outside of the city of Mekka whereby no one was allowed to deal with them. This boycott lasted for three years in which Muhammad's wife died and so did his uncle and protector Abu Talib.

Persecution persisted till the prophet reached the age of 53. In order to avoid an attempt on his life, the prophet had to flee his native city of Mekka and settle in the city of Medina (named Yathrib), some 210 miles to the north. The epic migration of Muhammad and of the small number of Muslims following him in year 622 marked the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

In Medina, the Muslims were well received by their hosts. Medina was in constant state of tribal warfare between two Arab tribes and three Jewish tribes. The coming of Muhammad unified the Arab tribes into a bond of brotherhood with the Muslims that

came from Mekka. The Muslims created a free and thriving society in Medina. Muslims started disturbing the Mekkan caravan trade that passed close to Medina on the way to Jerusalem. The Quraish leadership decided to eliminate the Muslim threat. A series of battles ensued whereby strong Mekkan armies would move to Medina to defeat the Muslims.

BATTLE AFTER BATTLE

In year 624, the battle of Badr saw a small Muslim army of 313 fighters defeat a much larger Quraish army of over 1,000 fighters. In year 626, another much stronger Quraish army came back to Medina to take revenge in the battle of Uhud. The Muslims won at first then lost badly after a Quraish counterattack led by Khalid ibn al-Walid. This battle ended as a draw (no side won). The Quraish could not defeat the smaller Muslim army and decided to withdraw. The Quraish came back to Medina with an even larger army (with some 10,000 fighters) in 627. When the Muslims heard of this threat, they decided to build a trench around the city of Medina and resist behind it. The Quraish undertook a siege of Medina for two months. When they realized that it was impossible to cross the trench under the shower of arrows, they withdrew. The Muslims had survived another close call. Enmity developed between the Muslims and the three Jewish tribes of Medina, some of whom had helped the Quraish against the Muslims. After a series of sieges by the Muslims, the Jewish tribes had to leave Medina and go settle farther north in Arabia where other Jewish tribes were living.

In year 628, the prophet decided to undergo a pilgrimage to Mekka which was still under Quraish control. He took 1,400 Muslims with him and showed up unannounced outside of Mekka during one of the sacred months. The Quraish could not break their own rule of banned fighting during the sacred months, and decided to negotiate with the Muslims. The peace treaty of Hudaybiya was signed whereby Muslims would not be allowed into Mekka until the next year and then just for a three-day period. The Muslims went back to Mekka and returned a year later for a (lesser) pilgrimage. The Quraish caravan trade past the city of Medina resumed during a period of peace.

The Muslims experienced peace in the south of Arabia but not in the north. They learned about a threat from the Jewish tribes to the north at Khaybar (some 110 miles north of Medina). Some of which had to leave Medina a couple of years before. They had gotten stronger and were preparing a major military campaign. A force of 1,600 Muslims marched to Khaybar in 629. After a siege, they were able to storm the fortresses which could not resist and took them under their control. A peace treaty was signed after which the Jewish tribes accepted Muslim rule and became sharecroppers with the Muslims by entering the status of “protected minority”. They would pay a special tax and live under Muslim protection but were allowed to keep their faith and way of life.

ARABIA IS PACIFIED

The Muslims undertook the (lesser) pilgrimage to Mekka that they were promised a year earlier. Members of the Quraish tribe had left the city and were observing from the

surrounding hills. Some Quraish leaders were so impressed that they decided to join the Muslims. This included Khalid ibn al-Walid.

The territory north of Arabia was under Roman rule. When the Romans heard of the growing Muslim power in Arabia, they decided to eliminate this potential foe. In 629, a 100,000 strong Roman force under the leadership of Emperor Heraclius' brother prepared to march for Medina. The Muslims learned of this threat, but did not realize the size of the enemy. A 3,000 men strong Muslim army marched north and met the Romans at Muta. Muslims fought highly outnumbered but showed unprecedented bravery and valor. They sustained heavy losses but inflicted maximum damage to the Romans who had never seen such fierceness and lack of fear of death. The Muslims lost lots of their leaders but Khalid ibn al-Walid was able to outmaneuver the Romans and save part of his force unharmed.

In 630, a tribe allied to the Quraish broke the ongoing peace treaty by attacking a Muslim tribe. The Muslims realized that they could not trust the Quraish, gathered a 10,000 strong army and marched to Mekka. Their arrival to the outskirts of Mekka was a complete surprise to the Quraish leadership who did not have time to organize a coherent defense. The Muslim army entered Mekka with almost no fighting and liberated that city from the throng of idolatry. The Muslims cleansed the Kaaba of its pagan idols and worshipped around it. The prophet decided to forgive his former enemies of the Quraish tribe which led to mass conversions.

Other tribes in Arabia heard of the Muslim victory and got wary of change in the balance of power in the region. They decided to attack the Muslim army which was still stationed in Mekka and had grown to 12,000 in two weeks. The Muslims were ambushed on their way to Taif. After heavy initial losses, they recovered and were able to win the battle of Hynayn. The tribes that had attacked the Muslims were so overconfident that they had brought even their women. The Muslim victory brought them lots of booty and captives. The defeated tribes hurried back to their fortifications in Taif and barricaded themselves. A one-month siege ensued after which the Muslims withdrew back to Medina. They freed most of the captives. Taif was the only hostile territory to the Muslims left in Arabia; but not for long. After a while a peace treaty was worked out between Taif and the Muslims of Medina.

MEDINA, THE FIRST ISLAMIC CAPITAL

Even though it was small in population, Medina was becoming the capital of the Muslim power in Arabia. The prophet sent messages to the major powers of the time (Romans, Persians, Copts in Egypt, Negus in Abyssinia) hoping to establish peaceful relations. Many deputations were received in Medina from various territories surrounding Arabia. They wanted to learn about Islam and be part of this emerging phenomenon.

The Romans felt a serious threat from the mounting Muslim power and prepared another major campaign against the Muslims. The Muslims learned about this threat, were able to muster a 30,000 strong army and marched to Tabuk (330 miles north of Medina) in the

northern border of Arabia. Remembering their previous encounter with a much smaller Muslim force, the Romans decided to withdraw to their fortified positions farther north and not engage the Muslims. The Muslims used this opportunity to pacify the various Arab tribes in this northern region.

The prophet invited the Muslims in Arabia to join him for a pilgrimage (would be known as the “Farewell Pilgrimage”) to Mekka. 100,000 Muslims joined him. One should remember that the population of Mekka was under 10,000 and Medina was comparable in population size. The prophet made an important speech in which he summarized his mission and advised the Muslims to stick to the teachings of Islam. He received the last revelation thereby completing the process of revelation of the Qur’an.

A few months later, the prophet died in Medina at age 63. He was leaving a strong faith and a group of dedicated companions. He never nominated a successor so that Muslims would not fall into the trappings of imperial succession.

Chapter 4: THE FOUR RIGHTLY GUIDED KHALIFS

ABU BAKR

Soon after the death of the Prophet of Islam in 632, the Medina Muslim community had to decide on a successor. The Prophet had not explicitly nominated a successor. At a meeting, the companions decided to choose his closest companion Abu Bakr to succeed him. When chosen, Abu Bakr made a memorable speech where he said "Follow my leadership as long as I do not deviate from the basic teaching of Islam. If I don't, then straighten me out".

The transition period created a loss of authority of Medina over the tribes of Arabia. Some tribes rebelled and challenged the authority of Abu Bakr. Some refused to pay the taxes. After crushing every discontent, Abu Bakr focused energies on conquests to the north of Arabia. Abu Bakr ruled as the first khalif for some 3 years. He asked close companions to compile the Qur'an from a master copy that was left by the Prophet (written on animal skin). This copy was checked against what companions had memorized. This first copy consisted of separate sheets written on parchment. Abu Bakr established the office of the treasury (Bayt al-Maal) among others. Just like the Prophet, Abu Bakr did not nominate a successor. Umar ibn al-Khattab was chosen by the companions using the same process of consultation.

UMAR

Umar expanded the Islamic territories greatly during his reign. The Muslim army conquered the Persian and the Byzantine empires. This comprised Mesopotamia, Persia, Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and North Africa and was accomplished within a few years. Umar ruled with a genuine sense of justice and fairness and was very strict with his appointed governors. His ways remained humble and he was accessible to the people. He developed roads and bridges in the expanded territories. He also maintained old wells and had new ones dug up along with irrigation canals. The governor of Egypt, Amr ibn al-Aas, oversaw the construction of a canal connected to the Nile River that would facilitate the transport of grains by boat. Umar oversaw the construction of some government buildings in Medina, the seat of the khalifate.

A number of military camps for the Arab soldiers were established in the newly conquered territories such as at Basra and Kufa in Iraq, at Fustat in Egypt, at Khurasan in the north-east frontier. A stipend was instituted for soldiers who became part of a professional military. Umar was killed by a non-Muslim. On his deathbed, Umar refused to nominate a successor. He, however, suggested the formation of a committee of trusted companions to choose his successor. Umar was the second rightly-guided Khalif for about 10 years.

UTHMAN

Uthman was chosen after the death of Umar. Uthman was a close companion of Prophet Muhammad. He had married one of the prophet's daughters. When this one died, he married a second daughter. For this, he was referred to as "the one with two lights" (Dhul Noorayn). During Uthman's reign, the Islamic territories expanded to include Iran, North Africa, the Caucasus and Cyprus. The administering of such vast territories created serious challenges to Uthman and his inexperienced khalifate. He relied heavily on members of his own clan (the Ummayads) that he appointed as governors of the new territories. Some of them were accused of corruption and incompetence. Uthman got the only official version of the Quran copied into six copies that were sent to the new Islamic territories. All other versions were destroyed along with various manuscripts containing traditions of the Prophet. The rule of Uthman lasted for 12 years. At the end of his rule, there was so much discontent towards him that a group of companions occupied his headquarters in protest. Uthman ended up being assassinated.

ALI

After the death of Uthman, Medina was in a state of chaos. A trusted group of companions chose Ali to be the fourth khalif. Ali dismissed a number of corrupt provincial governors that were appointed by Uthman. He also moved the seat of the khalifate from Medina (in Arabia) to Kufa which was a garrison city in southern Iraq. Muawiya, the governor of Syria (appointed by Uthman) rejected the authority of Ali and declared himself as khalif. This led to a civil war between Ali and Muawiya. A group of Muslims refused to take side in the civil war and decided to be against both parties. They decided to get both leaders assassinated. Muawiya escaped the assassination attempt while Ali was killed. The death of Ali (some 30 years after the death of the Prophet) ended the era of rightly-guided khalifs. The group of Muslims that had killed Ali is referred to as the Khawarij and will lead to the Ibadi Islamic school. This early history of the Islamic civilization will create the long-standing chasm between the Sunnis and the Shia. The Shia will consider the first three khalifs as usurpers of power and insist that Ali should have been the first khalif.

THE FOUR RIGHTLY GUIDED KHALIFS

The four rightly guided khalifs and their reign periods are summarized here.

Abu Bakr, 632-634
Umar ibn al-Khattab, 634-644
Uthman ibn Affan, 644-656
Ali ibn Abi Talib, 656-661

Chapter 5: THE UMMAYAD DYNASTY

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UMMAYAD DYNASTY

The pristine period of time under the prophet's leadership in Medina (10 years) continued under the rightly guided khaliphs (30 years). The first civil war under Ali's rule ended with the victory of Muawiya who became the first khalif of the Ummayad dynasty. Muawiya broke with the tradition of the first 40 years in Islamic history by nominating his son Yazid to succeed him. This started the reign of monarchs with inherited power and of ruling dynasties. The seat of the Ummayads was Damascus (Syria) which became the dominant center of power in the region. Influence of the Byzantine Empire got pushed back to Anatolia which became a border region of the new Islamic empire. In the east, the entire Persian Empire was now under Islamic rule. Arabs were at the center of power in the Ummayad dynasty. They, however, constituted a small minority in the formerly Byzantine and Persian territories. Arabs kept tight control over the reigns of political and military power but made extensive use of local non-Arab expertise in administering the new territories and in governing. The Ummayads relied heavily on the methods used by the Byzantines and Persians and trained personnel from the conquered territories. Arabic slowly replaced Greek and Persian as the official language of administration. Up to that time, currency consisted of the Byzantine gold Dinarium (the only gold coin of that time) and the silver coins that were minted by both the Byzantines and the Persians. The Ummayads used these forms of currency and started minting their own silver coins at first then in 694 khalif Abd al-Malik issued new Islamic gold coins.

The Kharijites were a group of Ali supporters who had turned against him on the day of Siffin when he agreed to arbitration between himself and Muawiya during the first Islamic civil war. It was a Kharijite who had assassinated Ali. Kufa in Iraq was a strong Kharijite center. They were against Ummayad rulers since they considered them as usurpers of power. They were also against the Shia of that time who believed that the succession should have been passed down to Ali and his descendants. The Shia stronghold was in Basra in southern Iraq. In 680 Husayn (son of Ali) led an insurrection against the Ummayad rule. The last battle took place in Karbala (Iraq) where the forces of Khalif Yazid (son of Muawiya) defeated Husayn's forces. Husayn was killed along with most members of his family and supporters. The only survivor was Husayn's young son, Zayd al-Abideen who was left in a tent (during the battle) because he was sick. This will be the presumed rightful heir and the fourth Imam for the Shia. Ali was the first Imam, Hasan was the second one and Husayn was the third one. This day (Muharram 8th 680) will be remembered in infamy and deepen the chasm between the Shia minority and the Sunni majority in power.

The city of Jerusalem remained as a bustling commercial center under the Ummayads. It was the birthplace of the other two monotheistic religions (Judaism and Christianity) and slowly adapted to the new environment. The Dome of the Rock shrine was constructed by Khalif Abd al-Malik on the Temple Mount adjoining the Aqsa mosque. This grandiose project would rival the Church of the Holy Sepulchre as a symbol of the new era. The

Great Mosque of Damascus was built by Abd al-Malik's son and successor Khaliph al-Walid. The Islamic civilization was determined to make its mark in history.

WEAKENING OF THE UMMAYAD DYNASTY

The Ummayad khalifs became powerful rulers but were increasingly disconnected from the population that was steadily converting to Islam. The doubtful moral character of some of the khalifs was hardly unnoticed. The privileged status of some of the Arab Syrian families was resentful. This was the case for the first seven khalifs. The eighth khalif Umar ibn abd al-Aziz, however, was a sincere ruler who made genuine effort to go back to the fair practices of the early days of Islam under the prophet and under the ~~first~~ four rightly-guided khalifs. He was too much for the corrupt Ummayads in power and got assassinated after ruling for merely three years (in 720). After him, corruption set back in along with increasing discontent.

The Ummayad rule had much opposition from within. The Kharijites and the Shia were committed to its destruction since they considered it as illegitimate. Incorporation of the Byzantine and Persian administrative and governing practices alienated the Sunni masses that saw these as a form of "innovation" and "foreign". There was strong opposition to the inherited "monarchy" spirit under the Ummayads. The population of non-Arab and half-Arab Muslims was increasing. There was a yearning for going back to the ways of the early days of Islam and for unifying the legal aspects of Islam so that rulers could be held accountable. A large number of scholars in the Islamic "sciences" developed. These included the interpretation of the Qur'an, the writing down of the narrated traditions of the prophet (keeping track of the chain of narrators) and the various legal aspects.

The Ummayad power weakened even in Syria and became increasingly non-existent elsewhere. The last four khalifs were replaced in short succession. A new and powerful Shia opposition emerged in Iran. In 747, Abu Muslim, the leader of a military sect in the eastern Iranian region of Khurasan started a revolt against the Ummayad khalifs citing their increasingly corrupt ways. Using a non-Arab force, he took control of Khurasan and marched across Iran towards Iraq. In 749, his army crossed the Euphrates River and defeated the Ummayad army in a series of battles. The last Ummayad khalif Marwan II was deposed in 750. He fled to Egypt, but was pursued and killed. This was the end of the Ummayad dynasty which had lasted for some 89 years. Abul al-Abbas was proclaimed as first khalif of the new Abbasid dynasty. He was a member of the family of al-Abbas (an uncle of the prophet) and not of Ali's family who was held in high esteem by the Shia as their first Imam. The Abbasid khalifs ruled from the newly created capital of Baghdad (Iraq).

At the end of the Ummayad dynasty, a small fraction of the population of the newly conquered territories was Muslim.

LIST OF THE UMMAYAD KHALIFS

A list of the Umayyad khalifs follows. These were all members of the same family.

Muawiyya ibn Abi Sufyan I, 661-680
Yazid, 680-683
Muawiya II, 683-684
Marwan, 684-685
Abd al-Malik, 685-705
al-Walid I, 705-715
Sylayman, 715-717
Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, 717-720
Yazid II, 720-724
Hisham, 724-743
al-Walid II, 743-744
Yazid III, 744
Marwan II, 744-750

Chapter 6: THE EARLY ABBASID DYNASTY

THE ABBASIDS COME TO POWER

One of the first decisions that Abu al-Abbas took when he became the first khalif of the Abbasid dynasty was to order the death of Abu Muslim, the military leader from his own tribe in Khurasan that ended the reign of the Ummayads and brought him to power. The new capital Baghdad (close to the former Persian capital Ctesiphon) became the center of power for the Abbasids who drew heavily on Persian expertise to rule and to administer. Whereas Ummayad power was concentrated in the hands of Arabs, the Abbasids relied on newly converted non-Arab Muslims.

At the beginning of the Abbasid dynasty, less than 10 % of the population in Syria, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Tunisia and Spain was Muslim. That fraction was heavily represented in the cities and government centers where former Persian and Byzantine civil servants had converted and were serving in the army and in the administration. There was no incentive for others in rural parts to convert. Some of these new Muslims were full-time salaried servants under the authority of the khalif. This environment created a period of strong centralized government which led to great economic prosperity.

The apogee of the early Abbasid dynasty happened during the reign of Harun al-Rashid (who ruled from 786 to 809). The classic tales in the “Thousand and One Nights” describe the level of prosperity of Baghdad at that time. At the death of Harun al-Rashid, his two sons, al-Amin and al-Ma’mun started a civil war. At first al-Amin was proclaimed khalif by the army of Baghdad and ruled for a period of four years. After that, he was defeated by his brother al-Ma’mun who took power with help from army units from outside of Baghdad.

THE ISLAMIC SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Arabic slowly displaced other local languages such as Syriac, Aramaic, Coptic and Greek. Persian stayed strong in the eastern provinces. Some old manuscripts were translated from these languages into Arabic. This included works of Aristotle, Plato, Euclid and other Greek philosophers and mathematicians. Greek thought penetrated Islamic discourse through a group called the Mutazila. These attempted to introduce rational thinking with the use of deductive reasoning and logic into Islamic thinking. The khalif al-Ma’mun supported these rationalist theologians whose views diverged from the main stream majority. But his successor was against them and realigned himself with the Sunni majority.

The major schools of Islamic law were formed around the following leaders: Abu Hanifa (d. 767), Malik ibn Anas (d. 796), Muhammad al-Shafii (d. 819) and Ahmed Ibn Hanbal (d. 855). The four elements used to render legal decisions were based on (1) the Qur’an, (2) the traditions of the prophet (Sunna), (3) the consensus of scholars (Ijma) and (4) the analogical reasoning (Qiyas). There were slight nuances between the four Sunni legal schools. Abu Hanifa placed more emphasis on educated reasoning. Ibn Hanbal advocated

the literal interpretation of the Qu'ran and the prophet's traditions. For him, a "weak" saying of the prophet (hadith) had more weight than the consensus of scholars or analogical reasoning. Al-Shafii presented a synthesis of the other legal schools.

The Islamic judicial system did not use a jury of peers, excluded circumstantial evidence, and did not allow cross examination or an appeal process. It emphasized evidence brought forth by two adult male witnesses against the accused and an oath sworn before God by the accuser and the defendant. The final verdict was rendered by the judge (qadi). In the case of homicide, the law allowed the families involved to settle the matter, oftentimes the family of the accused would pay the family of the victim an agreed upon sum of "blood" money. Much of the local customs had made it into the Islamic law.

At the same time, a consistent effort was made by many scholars to compile the sayings of the prophet based on reliable chains of narrations. The vast majority of unreliable sayings (hadiths) were rejected. The compilations of al-Bukhari (810-870) and Muslim (817-875) are the best known. During that same period of time, interest developed in the writing of history and in the recording of the biographies of the hadith transmitters. The compilation of al-Tabari (839-923) is well known.

Ibn Hanbal led the opposition against the Mutazila and the rationalist theologians. He believed in literal interpretation and de-emphasized personal reasoning. The debate between the two camps started at the level of ideas but spilled to violent encounters in the street.

DEVELOPMENT OF ISLAMIC THINKING

Al-Ashari (d. 935), a great Mutazila thinker synthesized a compromise between the two positions by using rational thinking to address and give logical answers to the great religious issues of that time. He used rational thinking to defend non-rational aspect of belief. The al-Ashari school will come to dominate Sunni Islam. Mutazila thought was suppressed in Baghdad and elsewhere and survived only in Shia theology.

The Shia are divided into two branches: the Twelvers and the Ismailis. The division began after the death of the sixth Imam for the Shia, Jafar al-Sadiq in 765. The Twelvers followed his son Musa while the Ismailis chose the lineage from his son Ismail. The Twelvers have moderate beliefs similar to those of the Sunnis whereas the Ismailis have more militant views and use more violent means going back to the time of the Ummayads. The twelfth Imam of the Twelvers' branch disappeared toward the end of the ninth century. These believe that he went into "occulation" and will return in due time.

The mystical Sufi movement became popular because it gave a fresh alternative to the "philosophers" propounding rational thinking and the "traditionalists" sticking to the letter of the basic Islamic teachings. Al-Hallaj (d. 922) was executed for blasphemy when in an inspired state he uttered "I am God", Hasan al-Basri (d. 728) and Rabia al-Adawiya (d. 801) had large followings. Sufis tended to stay outside of power circles but had great influence on religious thinking.

The introduction of paper brought from China in the ninth century helped greatly the transmission of ideas and scholarly endeavors. The circulation of written books increased. Paper ended up replacing papyrus completely.

Many contributions were made in the fields of theology, literature, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, architecture and sciences. Great thinkers of that time include al-Razi (d. 925) and al-Farabi (d. 950). The great capitals of Baghdad, Cairo, Cordoba, and Nishapur were beacons of light when European capitals were still in the Dark Ages. The Islamic civilization revived and added to Greek philosophy which then made it to Europe through Spain. Even parts of Italy and Sicily were under Islamic rule.

Under the Abbasids, Baghdad was a thriving city. The Tigris River provided an essential means of transportation for the various foods that were grown in the surrounding valleys and for the raw materials. The irrigation system developed by the Babylonians was upgraded and well maintained.

BREAKDOWN OF UNITY

The non-Arab Muslims that were at the heart of Abbasid power acquired much influence and control over all aspects of state affairs. The khalif saw his power decrease. In order to restore their control, the Abbasid khalifs recruited soldiers from the pastoral Turkish tribes in the Caucasus region (Central Asia). These had no local allegiance except to the khalif. In order to get away from the political intrigue of Baghdad and from an increasingly hostile population, the khalif al-Mutasim (833-842) moved his capital from Baghdad to the city of Samarra. Both cities lie on the bank of the Tigris River. However, after 50 years this new capital fell under the influence of the leaders of the Turkish soldiers and the seat of the Abbasid khalifate was returned to Baghdad. Turkish influence increased steadily especially in Anatolia and Syria.

Muslims were controlling a vast empire extending from the Atlantic to Central Asia. This proved to be impossible and disunity set in along with regional revolts starting with the reign of al-Muntasir (i.e., after 861). The local governors had the power to collect taxes and maintain an army. They took the authority of nominating their successors who were increasingly members of their family. In most Islamic provinces local governors asserted their power and declared autonomy from the Abbasid khalifate. In Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Iran and even Iraq, such movements led to the advent of local rulers who were still symbolically under the authority of the khalif but had complete power. These established local dynasties based on hereditary succession.

By the reign of al-Mustakfi (in 944), the authority of the khalifate collapsed when the Buwayids took over Baghdad. These were from a regional dynasty that was ruling western Persia. Their ruler became the commander of Baghdad. They were from the Shia but left the Sunni khalif at the head of the Abbasid dynasty as a symbolic figure. The Seljuks were another local dynasty ruling Syria and Anatolia and based upon Turkish military leaders. Turkish tribes were moving in masses from Central Asia to the region.

This created a buffer region between the Islamic territories in the Middle East and the decaying Byzantine Empire to the north.

A Khariji Ibadi movement controlled Oman in the south eastern part of Arabia. Another Ibadi movement in Algeria led to the establishment of the Rustamid dynasty (777-909) with its capital at Tahert. This movement drew from the Berber population. Another Shia movement, the Ismailis, fomented a rebellion in Tunisia, which led to the establishment of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt. The Sunni majority in most of the Middle East and North Africa was under Shia rulers such the Buwayids and the Fatimids.

By the tenth century, a large part of the population under Abbasid rule had become Muslim and Arabic had become the most used language in the Islamic world.

LIST OF THE EARLY ABBASID KHALIFS

A list of the early Abbasid khalifs follows. These sure had beautiful names as reminders of God's attributes.

Abul-Abbas al-Saffah, 749-754
al-Mansur, 754-775
al-Mahdi, 775-785
al-Hadi, 783-786
Harun al-Rashid, 786-809
al-Amin, 809-813
al-Mamun, 813-833
al-Matasim, 833-842
al-Wathiq, 842-847
al-Mutawakkil, 847-861
al-Muntasir, 861-862
al-Mustain, 862-866
al-Mutazz, 866-869
al-Muhtadi, 869-870
al-Mutamid, 870-892
al-Mutadid, 892-902
al-Muktafi, 902-908
al-Muqtadir, 908-932
al-Qahir, 932-934
al-Radi, 934-940
al-Muttaqi, 940-944
al-Mustakfi, 944-946

Chapter 7: THE FATIMID DYNASTY

THE FATIMIDS

The Ismailis were successful in establishing Yemen as an autonomous region independent of the authority of the Abbasid khalif. They started a missionary movement throughout the Islamic world. This effort established roots in Tunisia which brought fruit when Ubaydullah, an Ismaili pretender, took power in 910 thereby initiating the Fatimid dynasty (named after Fatima, the daughter of Prophet Muhammad). Ubaydullah proclaimed descent from the prophet through Ali and Fatima. The Fatimids were the first regional power in the Islamic Empire not to recognize the Abbasid khalif even as a symbolic authority. The first 3 Fatimid Khalifs ruled from Tunisia but the fourth one, al-Muizz conquered Egypt in 969 and moved his center of power to Cairo, a newly created city close to the old city of Fustat. The Fatimids rapidly conquered Palestine, Syria and Western Arabia and established a flourishing dynasty. They were able to divert trade from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea and the Mediterranean thereby weakening further Iraq and the Abbasid dynasty economically. Agriculture in the fertile Nile valley and delta contributed to the prosperity of the Fatimids. Export of Egyptian products grew. The Fatimid fleet controlled the eastern part of the Mediterranean.

Their military power was based upon Berbers from North Africa, Blacks from the Sudan and Turks from Asia Minor. These recruits did not have ties to the local population through kinship or tribal identity and were therefore more loyal to the khalif. Egyptians remained Sunnis even under the Fatimids who were Shia. At the death of Khalif al-Muntansir in 1094, the Fatimids split into two factions: one that recognized the authority of his younger son and the other that wanted an older son to succeed. That older son was put to death in Alexandria. The Persian Ismailis did not recognize the legitimacy of the younger son as Fatimid khalif ruling from Cairo.

For two and half centuries, the Fatimids competed with a weakened Abbasid dynasty and extended their influence over vast territories that included Egypt, Sicily, Syria, Persia, the holy sites in Western Arabia and even the Sind province in India.

What is ironic is that at the time that the Ismaili (Shia) Fatimids were in power at Cairo, the Twelver (Shia) Buwayids controlled the Abbasid Khalifate in Baghdad. Most of the population in both territories was Sunni, but these two Shia dynasties were enemies. The Buwayids still recognized the authority of the Sunni Abbasid khalif and did not attempt to replace him by someone from the Shia.

THE DRUZES OF LEBANON

The Fatimid khaliph al-Hakim who ruled from 996 to 1021 set out to spread the Ismaili faith into southern Lebanon by sending a missionary called Darazi (d. 1019). This started the Druze offshoot of the Ismaili movement. When al-Hakim died, they maintained that he “went into seclusion”. The al-Hakim cult was developed into a religion that moved away from main-stream Islam. The Druzes follow their own scripture called the Book of

Wisdom. They do not practice fasting during the month of Ramadan and do not perform the pilgrimage to Mekka, and believe in the transmission of souls over many lives through a form of reincarnation. They aspire to lead exemplary lives devoid of alcohol or even tobacco.

The Fatimid rule was ended by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi who was a Seljuk of Kurdish descent and initiated the Ayyubid dynasty in 1171.

THE FATIMID KHALIFS

A list of the Fatimid Khaliphs follows. Up till 1130, the rulers were considered Shia Imams. After that, they were referred to as khalifs.

al-Mahdi, 909-934
al-Qaim, 934-946
al-Mansur, 946-952
al-Muizz, 952-975
al-Aziz, 975-996
al-Hakim, 996-1021
az-Zahir, 1021-1035
al-Mustansir, 1035-1094
al-Mustali, 1094-1101
al-Amir, 1101-1130
al-Hafiz, 1130-1149
az-Zafir, 1149-1154
al-Faiz, 1154-1160
al-Adid, 1160-1171

Chapter 8: THE UMMAYADS OF SPAIN

THE MAGHRIB AND SPAIN

In the eighth century, a great grandson of Ali (from a wife other than Fatima) named Idris went from Syria to Morocco and founded the city of Fes which became the capital of the Idrisid dynasty (789-926). The wave of conquests during the Ummayad dynasty included all of North Africa (called the Maghrib) and Spain (called the Andalus). The Islamic army landed in Spain in 710 under the leadership of Tariq ibn Ziyad (Gibraltar was named after him). It is reported that he burned his ships as a symbol of no return. The Muslims took over Spain and Portugal and were stopped at Poitier (in France) by the French king Charles Martel in 732. All of the Iberian Peninsula was under Islamic rule for over three hundred years with its capital at Cordoba. Seville was another major Islamic center. Spain was settled by Berbers from Whoi founded the city of Fes in Morocco. North Africa, Syrians and other Arabs.

When the Abbasids took over power from the Ummayads in the Middle East (in 750), a member of the Ummayad khalif family fled to Spain and kept alive the claim of the Ummayds to the khalifate. While the Abbasids were in power in Baghdad, Spain was ruled by the Ummayads of Spain from Cordoba. Their rule was characterized by high tolerance for the Christian and Jewish minorities. Muslims constituted the majority of the population in Spain.

During the eleventh century, the Islamic kingdom of Spain broke up into small territories divided between Berbers and Arabs. This splintering trend was happening at the same time under the Ummayads of Spain as well as under the Abbasids of Baghdad. The khalif was losing central authority. This division helped the Christians in the north to start the reconquest of Spain and started pushing the Muslim influence southward. The Christian expansion southward was, however, slowed down by two Islamic dynasties that appeared sequentially in Spain.

THE ALMORAVIDS AND THE ALMOHADS

The Almoravid (or Al- Murabit) movement started in the fringes of the Moroccan desert and expanded to include Morocco, Mauritania, Western Algeria and Senegal in Northwest Africa and Spain and Portugal to the north. The Almoravids brought an unadorned style of strict observance to the Maliki legal teachings and were suspicious of rational thinking. The famous mosque (which became also a university) al-Qarawiwwin was built by the Almoravids in Fes. They ruled the region from 1056 to 1147.

After them, the Almohad (or Al-Muwahhid) movement received strong support from the Berbers in the Atlas Mountains and expanded to control Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and the remaining Muslim part of Spain. The Almohad leader, Ibn Toumert (1078-1130) was a religious reformer who had studied in the Middle East and wanted to restore the integrity of pristine Islam. The Almohad capital was Marrakesh (in Morocco) at first then

got transferred to Cordoba and Seville (Spain) in 1170. By 1212, the Almohads got defeated by an alliance of the Spanish princes who ended their reign in Spain. The capital got moved back to Marrakesh. Moorish (i.e., Islamic) dominance of Spain ended soon after. The Almohads continued to rule parts of North Africa till tribal revolts split their territory and ended their dynasty. The Almohads ruled from 1130 to 1269.

Famous names in history are associated with the Almohad period such as Ibn Rushd and ibn Arabi. Ibn Arabi became a famous Sufi thinker after he experienced visions of the holy city of Mekka which led him to write his book on “Mekkan Revelations”. He also wrote “The Gems of Wisdom”. He was a proponent of strict adherence to the Qur’an and Sunna. He went to live in Anatolia in the Seljuk sultanate then moved to Damascus where he died.

EARLY KHALIFS FOR THE UMMAYADS OF SPAIN

A list of the Umayyad Emirs then Kaliphs of Andalusia follows. Between 1009 and 1031, a series of 14 khalifs were replaced in short succession due to the weakening of the khalif’s authority. The names of those 14 khalifs are not included.

Abd ar-Rahman I, 756-788
Hisham I, 788-796
al-Hakam I, 796-822
Abd ar-Rahman II, 822-852
Muhammad I, 852-886
al-Mundhir, 886-888
Abdallah, 888-912
Abd ar-Rahman III, 912-961
al-Hakam II, 961-976
Hisham II, 976-1009

Chapter 9: THE SHIA

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHIA BELIEFS

The Shia believe in the traditions transmitted by Prophet Muhammad's family through Ali and Fatima. Ali was their first Imam, his sons al-Hasan and al-Husayn were their second and third Imams, etc. The Shia believe that Ali should have been the successor after the prophet died. The Sunni argue that Ali was 27 years younger than Abu Bakr and that the prophet did not name a successor. The community chose the first four khalifs. The line of Imams stopped at the twelfth who disappeared (went into "occultation") in 874 and is believed to come back in due time as the foretold Mahdi. The imams are believed to be infallible and entitled to be in position of authority. They were all selected for succession by their predecessor.

The Shia follow the Jafari school of law which had much in common with Sunni schools. The Shia, however, include only the traditions of the prophet that were transmitted by Ali and his descendants. They look up to the authority of a clergy. Deductive reasoning propounded by the Mutazila in the ninth century has survived in Shia thought but not within the Sunnis. The consensus of the community was de-emphasized and replaced by the opinion of members of the clergy.

The Shia venerated the tombs of the Imams such as the shrine of Hysayn in Karbala. Husayn was killed by the Ummayad khalif Yazid in 780. Sunnis were fundamentally against the veneration of Sufi saints and the pilgrimage to their shrines.

THE SHIA MOVEMENTS

There are many branches within the Shia that appeared during the Abbasid period. In the eighth century, the Zaydis did not recognize the fifth Imam al-Baqir but recognized his brother Zayd instead. They did not believe in automatic succession and that the Imam is infallible. In the ninth century, they created an imamate in Yemen. Ismail was the elder son of the sixth imam Jafar al-Sadiq. Ismail died before his father. At the death of Jafar al-Sadiq in 765, a division appeared between those who chose his other son Musa (these will become the Twelvers) and those who wanted the son of Ismail to be next in the line of succession (these will become the Ismailis). The Ismailis were strongly against Abbasid rule and fomented much opposition to their authority.

The Fatimids were part of an Ismaili movement that took power in North Africa, then in Egypt and Syria and created a thriving dynasty in the tenth, eleventh and part of twelfth centuries. When the Fatimid dynasty got replaced by the Sunni Ayyubids, influence of the Shia decreased except in parts of Syria, Iran, Iraq and Yemen. The Shia constitute 15 % of the Muslim population. Two other offshoot Shia movements survived in Syria and Lebanon; the Druze who believed that the Fatimid khaliph al-Hakim (996-1021) had disappeared but will return, and the Alawis (also called Nusayris) who venerated Ali and considered him to be the sole worthy and legitimate leader. Druzes and Alawis were considered so far from main-stream Islamic beliefs that they were persecuted.

Another Ismaili offshoot called the assassins broke away from the Fatimids in 1094 and ruled from a stronghold on Mt Alamut in northern Persia. They murdered members of the Abbasid ruling family as well as Sunni thinkers (Ulama). They were following a "hidden Imam".

LIST OF THE FIRST SEVEN SHIA IMAMS

The names of the first seven Shia imams and the date of their death are included here.

1. Ali, d. 661
2. al-Hasan, d. 669
3. al-Husayn, d. 680
4. Ali Zayd al-Abidin, d. 714
5. Muhammad al-Baqir, d. 731
6. Jafar al-Sadiq, d. 765
7. Musa al-Kazim (d. 799) was believed to be the seventh Imam according to the Twelvers whereas Ismail (d. 760) was regarded as the seventh Imam by the Ismailis.

The twelfth imam of the Twelvers was Muhammad al-Muntazar who disappeared towards the end of the ninth century.

Chapter 10: THE LATE ABBASID PERIOD

TURKISH INFLUENCE

Since the ninth century, the Abbasids were importing Turks from Central Asia and training them since childhood for military service. The khalif al-Mutasim started a tradition of receiving quotas annually from the eastern provinces of the Caucasus. In time, Turkish troops and commanders replaced Arabs and Persians in the military. This trend started under the Abbasids and was continued under other Islamic dynasties. For example, in Iran, the Persian Samanid dynasty depended so much on Turks in the military that it got succeeded by Turkish dynasties (the Ghaznavids and the Karakhanids). The Seljuk Turkish tribes settled the region of Bukhara in the late tenth century and entered the fold of Islam. The Seljuks took over Iran, then Syria and Palestine. They conquered Byzantine territories in Anatolia. In the eleventh century, they took over Baghdad but kept the Abbasid khalif in power. Seljuk sultans, however, were the effective rulers. At the death of the third Seljuk Sultan Milkshah in 1092, his sons started a civil war which divided their territories. It was at this period of division that the Crusaders showed up in the Middle East in 1096.

THE CRUSADES

The Muslims were ruling much of the formerly Christian territories in the Middle East. The border line with the Byzantine Empire had been pushed back well into Anatolia. The Copts were living peacefully under Islamic rule in Egypt. Spain was conquered by the Muslims in the eight century and was experiencing an unprecedented era of prosperity. Sicily and parts of Italy were under Islamic rule for a while. Even the Christians who did not convert to Islam and were living in Islamic territories were now well Arabized. In Europe, a movement started pushing for the reconquest of Islamic territories in Spain through the Reconquista movement and in Palestine through a series of crusades.

In 1071, the Byzantine army received a big defeat by the Seljuk army under the Abbasid khalifate in Anatolia. The Roman emperor, Alexius I, with support from Pope Urban II called on Christian rulers in Europe to unite against the growing Islamic threat in Asia Minor and invited Christiendom for a gathering in Constantinople in order to start a crusade to free Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the “infidels”. Christians had shown results in pushing back the Muslims to the south of Spain. Warriors from all over Western Europe (France, Spain, England, Italy, etc) gathered strength and marched to Constantinople first, then to Jerusalem. The Crusaders were called Franks because the majority of them were from France. When the crusaders showed up in the Middle East, it was a complete surprise to the Seljuks ruling the region at the time. They expected small nuisances from the Byzantines at the border, but had no idea that this large threat would be coming from Western Europe. The large Crusader army of 120,000 overtook the city of Jerusalem in 1099 after a long siege. This was part of the first crusade. The crusaders massacred all Muslims and Jews who were living in the city. They pillaged and destroyed holy sites. The Dome of the Rock was converted into a church. The Aqsa mosque was renamed the Temple of Solomon and became the residence of the Christian king of

Jerusalem. A number of crusader principalities were created at Antioch, Tripoli, Tyre and Acre along the Mediterranean coast of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. The city of Jerusalem will be under Crusader rule for almost a century.

Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (also known as Saladin), a Kurdish military leader ended the reign of the Fatimids in Egypt in 1172 and was able to focus the Muslim fervor against the crusaders who had taken over parts of Syria and Palestine. He re-established allegiance to the Abbasid khalif thereby unifying the Sunni majority and set out to reconquer Jerusalem. In 1187, he defeated the crusader army which had gotten much smaller over the years and took over Jerusalem. He spared the civilian population and respected the holy places. The defeated crusader military leader, Richard the Lionheart, accepted the surrender of Acre (a crusader state on the Mediterranean) then proceeded to massacre all of its population. Salah al-Din undertook campaigns against the small crusader principalities some of which survived along the Mediterranean coast for a while. Members of the Jewish faith came back to live in Jerusalem under Islamic rule. There was a series of crusades that went on for centuries. Jerusalem had been taken by the crusaders during the first crusade and was lost to the Muslims during the third crusade. Subsequent crusades were of no consequence.

ISLAMIC DYNASTIES

From the tenth century, the Islamic territories were administered by three khalifs ruling from three capitals: Baghdad (Iraq), Cairo (Egypt) and for a time from Cordoba (Spain). The Abbasid khalif in Baghdad ruled over Iran and southern Iraq but had lost most of his authority to local regional rulers. In the tenth century, the Buwayids moved from the Caspian Sea region and took over Baghdad in 945. These were from the Shia but kept the Sunni Abbasid khalif in power. In the eleventh century, the Seljuks had established a Turkish dynasty which took over Baghdad in 1055. The Sunni Seljuk sultans kept their allegiance to the Abbasid khalif. The Cairo khalif ruled over Egypt, Syria and western Arabia during the Fatimid dynasty (909-1171). The Fatimids were from the Shia. The Sunni Ayyubid dynasty started by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi succeeded the Fatimids and ruled until 1260. The Almoravids ruled the Northwest Territories (Spain and the Maghreb) from the middle of the eleventh to the middle of the twelfth centuries. They were succeeded by the Almohads for another century.

ISLAMIC LAW AND THOUGHT

The Shafii School of Islamic law was widespread in Egypt, Syria, the Hijaz, and to a certain extend in Iran and Iraq. The Hanafi School was followed in Central Asia and India. The Maliki School had monopoly over the Maghreb. The Hanbalis became important in Iraq and Syria from the twelfth century.

For the consensus (Ijma), the Hanafis accepted that of the companions only and rejected that of later scholars. They gave a broader scope to legal interpretation (Ijtihad). They also gave to scholars a limited authority to interpret the Qur'an and the Hadiths.

There was another Islamic school of law besides the four main Sunni schools (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafii and Hanbali) and the Shia school (Jafari); this was the Dhahiri school which emphasized the literal interpretation of the Qur'an. This school found some support in the Khariji Ibadis but ended up disappearing completely.

The philosophers gave great emphasis to reason and deductive logic. They had great influence during the tenth and eleventh centuries. Thinkers like al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sinna, al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd added greatly to the debate between the philosophers and the religious thinkers of the time. Issues like whether God was involved in the life of individuals in the minutest details, whether the Qur'an should be interpreted literally, etc. were center stage.

The House of Wisdom (Dar al-Hikma) was created by Khalif Al-Mamun in Baghdad. It attracted scholars of all the available sciences from all over the Islamic world. Books were copied by professional scribes and authenticated. An entire street was dedicated to book sellers in the bazaar. The House of Learning (Dar al-Ilm) was founded by the Fatimids in Cairo in the eleventh century along with the al-Azhar University. This perpetrated a strong tradition of religious learning and legal scholarship.

Arabic was used for religious and legal matters throughout the Islamic world, even by Persians and Turks. For example, a new form of Pahlavi Persian language written using the Arabic script (and containing a great deal of Arabic words) appeared in the tenth century. The famous Persian poet Firdawsi (940-1020) popularized this form in his masterpiece Shanameh ("the National Epic"). This form of Persian was used for literature and poetry and will endure till modern times. Increasingly in the Islamic world, Turkish would become the language of the ruling elite while Arabic would remain the unifying universal means of communication.

THE SUFIS

The Sufi movement became popular early on in Islamic history. The followers sought a spiritual awakening through repentance and abstinence. The best known is the Qadiriya branch which goes back to Abd-al Qadir al-Jilani who lived in Baghdad (1077-1166). Other movements like the Shadiliya in Egypt and the Maghrib, the Mawlawiya in Anatolia and the Naqshbandi in Central Asia were also popular. They covered a wide spectrum from the sober orders with their roots in Sunni Islam to the intoxicated ones with roots in Hinduism. Many orders venerated saints and prayed for their intercession. Their shrines became much visited places of worship.

A famous Sufi thinker al-Ghazali (1058-1111) provided answers to bothersome religious questions of the time. He provided convincing arguments to counteract the prevalent and clashing thoughts of the Ismailis and the philosophers. Reason is an effective tool, he argued; however, it should not be applied in matters of faith. It could never lead to the enlightened state that the Sufis achieve using prayer, fasting and meditation. Al-Ghazali traveled to Syria and Palestine and established the first Sufi center (Zawiya).

WEAKENING OF THE ABBASIDS

The gradual weakening of the Abbasid khalifate and its eventual collapse prompted by the Mongol invasion in 1258 brought an end to the privileged status of Baghdad as the premier center of Islamic learning and Arabic culture. This role moved to Cairo which was thriving under the Mamluks.

In the eleventh century, most of the Islamic world was under Shia rule despite the fact that Sunnis constituted the majority population. Khurasan was the first province to revert to Sunni rule under the Turkish Ghaznavids. By the twelfth century, Turkish migration into Anatolia had established a strong Seljuk dynasty with its capital at Konya. A Turkish Sunni Islamic culture replaced the Greek Christian (Byzantine) culture. The Seljuks will end up conquering most of the Abbasid territories.

However, revolts among the Turkish tribes hasted the decline of Seljuk unity. Their territory was split into a number of small territories ruled by the Turkish military officers who were governing them. The Persians still served in the administration under the Seljuks but their influence was lost to a Turkish military class. The main opposition to that new order came from the Ismailis in the form of the "assassins" movement in Iran. This was a violent Shia faction that advocated the killing of Abbasid rulers. For instance, they murdered the Seljuk ruler Nidham al-Mulk.

THE MONGOLS

The Mongols were nomadic tribes from Central Asia who acquired great military power under Genghis Khan who was able to unify the tribes of Mongolia in 1206 and affirmed himself as their Khan. Mongols and pagan Turkish tribes started a wave of conquest. By 1220, Bukhara and Samarkand were conquered. They crossed the Oxus River and conquered Eastern Iran. After the death of Genghis Khan in 1227, his grandsons conquered Western Iran, Georgia, Armenia and parts of Iraq. One of Genghis Khan's grandsons, Hulagu Khan received orders from the Grand Mongol Khan to conquer the Islamic lands up to Egypt. By 1243, the Mongols had defeated the Seljuks of Anatolia. In 1258, they took over Baghdad, killed a great deal of the Muslim inhabitants and executed the Abbasid khalif and his family thereby ending the Abbasid khalifate. The pagan Mongols had brought an end to a mighty dynasty of the Islamic civilization; cities were looted, populations were massacred, entire regions were destroyed. The Mongol army was stopped by the Mamluk forces in Syria in 1260 and was not allowed to reach Egypt. After the fall of Baghdad, Cairo will become the new hope for the Islamic civilization and the new center of Arabic culture.

At the height of the Abbasid dynasty, the city of Baghdad had a population of close to one million people. After the Mongol invasion, the population dwindled.

LIST OF THE LATE ABBASID KHALIFS

A list of the khalifs of the late Abbasid period follows.

al-Muti, 946-974
al-Tai, 94-991
al-Qadir, 991-1031
al-Qa’im, 1031-1075
al-Muqtadi, 1075-1094
al-Mustazhir, 1094-1118
al-Mustarshid, 1118-1135
al-Rashid, 1135-1136
al-Muqtafi, 1136-1160
al-Mustanjid, 1160-1170
al-Mustadi, 1170-1180
al-Nasir, 1180-1225
al-Zahir, 1225-1242
al-Muzta’sim, 1242-1258

Chapter 11: TURKS AND MONGOLS

THE SULTANATE STATES

By 1250, the eighth crusade organized by the king of France Louis IX was trying to wrestle territory to the Ayyubids when the sultan in charge died. In order to keep cohesion within the troops, the sultan's wife Shajar al-Dhurr kept his death secret till his son Turan Shah returned from Mesopotamia, then defeated the Crusaders. The Mamluk military leader called Baybars turned on Turan Shah, killed him and declared Shajar al-Durr as the new sultan. This would be the only time that a woman was at the head of an Islamic dynasty. She would survive for a couple of years but had to step down due to overwhelming opposition.

The Mongol khans of Iran (the Il-khans) were subordinate to the Great Khan of Mongolia. In 1259, Hulagi conquered Armenia, Upper Meopotamia and parts of Syria. But in 1260, he was defeated by the Mamluk army led by Baybars at Ayn Jalut (the Spring of Goliath) in Palestine. The Mamluks reoccupied Syria thereby stopping the Mongol advance. Baybars became the sultan of the new Mamluk dynasty of Egypt. Baybars brought a fleeing member of the Abbasid dynasty to Cairo which started a line of symbolic "shadow" khalifs.

This will start another period of decentralized power of small regional sultanate states throughout the region; the Mamluks, the Seljuks, the Timurids, and the early Ottomans are examples of such regional powers.

The rise of the Fatimids in the western part of the Middle East and of the Seljuks in the eastern part created a borderline between Syria and Iraq. The Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century accentuated this borderline. Syria would remain in the sphere of influence of Egypt, while Iraq would stay closer to Iran throughout subsequent history.

THE MAMLUKS

The Mamluks were Turkish military mercenaries that were brought by the Ayyubids from the Caucasus in Central Asia (north of the Black Sea). They were from the Kipchak tribe. The literal meaning of the word Mamluk in Arabic is "owned servant". The Mamluks acquired so much influence and power that their officers seized power from the Ayyubids and established a dynasty of their own in 1260. Like their Ayyubid predecessors, they controlled Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Western Arabia. The Mamluks finished off any influence of the shrinking crusader states along the Mediterranean coast.

The Mamluks continued the Seljuk form of government adopted by the preceding Ayyubids. They, however, adopted the military weapons and tactics of the Mongols. They even followed Mongol dress code and wore a long hair style.

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the population of Cairo was 250,000 people. The cities of Damascus and Tunis had around 100,000 people. In Western Europe at the same time, there was no city over 100,000 people. Under the Mamluks in Egypt and

Syria and the Mongols in Iran and Iraq, global trade grew and prosperity came with it. Textiles and porcelain were brought from China, spices from Southeast Asia, gold from Ethiopia down the Nile River to Cairo and from the Niger River to the Maghrib across the Sahara Desert by caravan. Young black recruits were brought from the Sudan and Ethiopia and young Slavs were brought from the Balkans to contribute to the Mamluk dynasty. Note that the sons of the Mamluks could not themselves become members of the military but could serve in other capacities. Under the Mamluks in Egypt, the Copts had important official positions in finances while the Jews contributed greatly to medicine. Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328) is a well-known thinker and religious writer of the Mamluk period.

Under the Mamluks, all four Sunni legal schools were represented at all courts. A system of appeal was established. Every week, the Mamluk ruler of Cairo would attend a public hearing along with military and judicial leaders as well as other officials to hear petitions and grievances from the public. A system of endowments was established to provide a sound financial basis for many institutions such as mosques, schools, hospitals, lodging for travelers, etc.

The Mamluk military was formed of recruits from Kipchak Turks. Circassians from the Balkans, Kurds and others also joined later on. Mamluk officers received land grants for their service. The spoken languages were Turkish and Kipchak; Arabic became a second language within the military class. The sultanate succession became hereditary. Trade with Europe brought economic prosperity.

First hand accounts of the Islamic world at the time of the Mamluks was recorded by a traveler/adventurer called Ibn Battuta (1304-1377) who set out from his native city of Tangiers in Morocco and traveled in the Muslim world for a period of over 30 years. He would make his way to Mekka with a caravan of pilgrims, connect up with a group of Muslims from another land, join them on their trip back, live there for a few years, then return to Mekka and start the process again for another land. The law degree that he had acquired while in Tangier served him well. He was able to make a living in the lands that he visited by contacting the ruler and offering his services. He visited Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Yemen, East Africa, Oman, Asia Minor, the Caucasus and southern Russia, India, the Maldives Islands and China. While in New Delhi, he became a member of the family of the local ruler Muhammad Tughlul through marriage. Tughlul bestowed upon him the tax revenue from two small villages in India. He also appointed him as ambassador to China. At that time, most of India and parts of China were under Islamic rule. Ibn Battuta recounted the situation in the Middle East when the Black Death plague hit the region in 1348. Cairo lost one third of its population. After some 25 years of traveling, he went back to Morocco and from there to the Andalus (southern Spain) and to the Sahel (sub-Sahara states). Throughout all these travels, he was able to communicate in the Arabic language.

TIMUR THE LAME

The Mongol state in Russia (referred to as the khanate of the Golden Horde) became a Muslim state with majority Turkish (Kipchak) population. An alliance was arranged between the Mamluks of Egypt and the Golden Horde. The Mongols of Iran converted to Islam in 1295. A peace treaty between the Mamluks of Egypt and the Mongols of Iran was signed in 1323. The Mongol khanate of Iran became divided into small territories ruled by local dynasties after the death of Il-Khan Abu Said in 1336. Timur the Lame (also known as Tamerlane) became leader of the Mongol territory of Central Asia. In 1380, he invaded Iran and conquered it over the next few years. He defeated the Golden Horde of Russia, attacked India, acquired Iraq and Syria. He then made a treaty with the Mamluks of Egypt. He went on and invaded Anatolia where he defeated the Ottomans in 1402.

Timur died in 1405. His conquests were devastating to the region. His death brought an end to Mongol control of the region but Turkish influence will last much longer, fueled by increased migration of the steppe peoples. The descendants of Timur continued to rule Eastern Iran and Transoxiana from their capitals at Samarqand and Bukhara. The Mamluks ruled over Egypt and the Ottomans ruled over Anatolia. Syria in-between was a spot of friction between the two. The Timurid dynasty (1370-1506) that was initiated by Timur was characterized by great contributions to architecture, art and literature in the Persian and Turkish languages.

EARLY OTTOMANS

In the fourteenth century, a new Turkish dynasty (the Ottomans) was started by Osman and his successors in Anatolia. In 1326, they chose Bursa to be their first capital. Later on, Ottoman forces conquered Gallipoli and Adrianople, then within one century brought most of Balkan territories under their rule. This included Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary Macedonia and Kosovo. The fourth Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I (1389-1401) ruled over extended Anatolia as the “Sultan of Rum” (ruler over the former Roman Byzantine territories). He defeated European forces sent to liberate the Balkans. Bayezid I was captured by the forces of Timur the Lame at the battle of Ankara in 1402 and committed suicide in captivity. His sons fought among themselves for succession.

In 1413, Mehmet I defeated his brother but had to deal with multiple rebellions. Murad I (1421-1444) recovered most of the territories lost to the Greeks, Serbs and Hungarians. The Ottoman dynasty was maturing. The system of young devshirme boys used as recruits for the military was established. They were from Christian territories in the Balkans, but were taken under the authority of the sultan. They were given the best education that was available and became the backbone of the military (such as the so-called Janissaries) and the leaders of the bureaucracy needed to administer the growing empire.

In 1452, Murad I was succeeded by his son Mehmet II who set out to conquer the last bastion of the Byzantines, the fortified city of Constantinople. After a long siege, the

Ottoman forces conquered the city which was renamed Istanbul and became the new capital of the Ottoman Empire in 1453.

The end of the fifteenth century saw a struggle for power between the Ottomans and the Mamluks of Egypt. The Ottomans had adopted the new technology of firearms (muskets and artillery) while the Mamluks resisted this change. They were out-powered and lost the region to the Ottomans in 1517.

Chapter 12: THE GUNPOWDER EMPIRES

FIFTEENTH CENTURY

By the fifteenth century, Islam in its Sunni form was the faith of the majority population in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and most of India. Arabic was the language of communication. The Shia movement which had dominated much of the Islamic world in the tenth century had scaled back to specific regions. The Twelvers were still numerous in Lebanon, southern Iraq and Iran and the Ismailis were still a majority in Yemen, Iran and parts of Syria. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Islam had spread into the east coast of Africa across the Red Sea and into Sudan up the Nile River. In this period, the Islamic lands were under increasing challenges from Western Europe.

THE SPANISH AND THE PORTUGUESE

Development in ship building and in exploration brought Portuguese and Spanish influence to the Indian Ocean down the southern tip of Africa (the Cape of Good Hope). Trading posts were established on the east coast of Africa and on ports throughout the Indian Ocean. This moved the trade between the Middle East and Europe from the Mediterranean Sea where it had been for centuries to the Indian Ocean and put the Middle East out of business. The Christian reconquest of Spain was complete by 1492 with the end of the dying kingdom of Grenada. That same year was when Christopher Columbus discovered America. At the same time, the advent of technology (such as of gunpowder) brought advances in naval power and weaponry (rifles and cannons). These changes affected the Islamic world in a drastic way. Three gunpowder empires appeared, the Ottomans of Anatolia, the Saffavids of Iran and the Mughals of India.

THE GUNPOWDER EMPIRES

The Ottomans had expanded into European territory and were ruling from their new capital Istanbul. In the early sixteenth century, the Ottomans defeated the Mamluks and took over control over Egypt, Syria and the western part of Arabia (around 1517). They pushed their conquest along the Mediterranean coast up to the border with Morocco and took up the defense of the coast of North Africa against the Spanish armada. Morocco per se, was never under Ottoman rule. It was ruled by the Sadid dynasty (1511-1628) which had succeeded the Marinids (1196-1464). Greece, Malta, Cyprus, the Balkans and much of Eastern Europe (including Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary Macedonia and Kosovo) were also under Ottoman rule. The height of the Ottoman Empire happened under the rule of Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566). The population of Istanbul was over 500,000 people while European capitals were hardly half that size. Istanbul was truly a center of culture with exquisite architecture. The religious minorities enjoyed some protection. Part of the Jewish population that had to leave Spain during the inquisition had settled in Istanbul. The Christian Orthodox population under Ottoman rule adapted reasonably well. They provided young recruits for the Ottoman military and administration. The Ottoman expansion into Europe was stopped when they failed to take Vienna after a long

siege (1683). The Ottoman Empire with Sunni persuasion was competing for control of the Middle East with the Saffavid Empire..

In Persia, the Timurid dynasty (started by Timur) had inherited from the Mongols. The Timurids were succeeded by the Saffavids in the early sixteenth century. These completed their control over Iran and Transoxania. In 1501, the head of the Saffavid family, Ismail proclaimed himself Shah of Iran. The population of Persia was still largely Sunni. The Saffavids established a dynasty based on Twelver Shia belief. Sufi practices such as saint veneration were incorporated. The Saffavids controlled Iran, Iraq and much of the Persian Gulf coast.

Rivalry between the Ottoman sultan Selim and Shah Ismail of the Saffavids reached a state of open war in 1514. The Ottoman superior artillery brought them victory. The Saffavids (like the Mamluks of Egypt) resisted the technological changes in weaponry. The Ottomans, however, did not push further east into Saffavid territory and retreated. It was not until the reign of Shah Abbas (1587-1629) that the Saffavids instituted an infantry and adopted artillery copied from the Ottoman model. Enmity between the Ottomans and the Saffavids lasted for a long time and brought open persecutions of Shiites in the Ottoman territories and of Sunnis in Saffavid territories. Baghdad was the border between Ottoman and Saffavid territories. It was captured by the Ottomans in 1534, lost to the Saffavids in 1623 and taken back by the Ottomans in 1638.

The Saffavid dynasty peaked under Shah Abbas (1587-1629). Shah Abbas stopped the Uzbeks of Central Asia from their annoying raids into Saffavid territory, made peace with the Ottomans, abandoned Georgia and Azerbaijan and moved the Saffavid capital from Tabriz (which was at the border of the empire) to Isfahan (right in the middle of Persia) in 1597. Shah Abbas reconquered Tabriz and parts of Iraq a few years later. He got help from the English (a new player in the Indian Ocean though the East India Company) to recapture the gulf of Hormuz on the Persian Gulf which had been under Portuguese control since 1514. The death of Shah Abbas brought a rapid decline of the Saffavid dynasty.

At the same time, the Mughal dynasty was established in India with its capital at New Delhi. Northern India had been under Islamic influence for a long time. The Mongol rule had resulted in the Delhi sultanate (1211-1556). The Mughals were descendant from the Mongol ruling family and from Timur. They controlled most of the Indian subcontinent. The Mughals were a Muslim (Sunni) minority who was controlling a Hindu majority population. The Mughal dynasty reached its apogee under Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) and was characterized by tolerance between Muslims and Hindus. The poll tax imposed on religious minorities in Islamic lands was abolished under the Mughals. These were patrons of great art and architecture. The Taj Mahal was built by Shah Jahan (a grandson of Shah Akbar) as a shrine for his departed wife.

The Ottoman fleet challenged the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean and the Spaniards in the Mediterranean Sea and even along the Atlantic coast of Western Europe. They made serious attempts to dominate Southeast Asia but they were no match to the Portuguese

naval power and had to withdraw from the Indian Ocean. Their naval superiority in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea, however, lasted for centuries.

The decline of the gunpowder empires coincided with the European industrial revolution and the assertion of European military, industrial and economic power. Commercial rivalries between the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English in the Indian Ocean ushered in a new era.

Chapter 13: THE OTTOMANS

THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

All of the Arabic speaking countries were part of the Ottoman territories except for the eastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, the Sudan and Morocco. Arab territories consisted of the Middle East and North Africa. These were an important source of revenue. The Ottomans also ruled Eastern Europe including Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary Romania, and Armenia. The ruling class was formed of recruits from the Balkans and the Caucasus who received the best education (the so-called Devsirme system). The brainy ones ended up serving in administration while the brawny ones served in the military (for example the Janissary infantry Corps or the Sipahi cavalry Corps). Janissaries were not allowed to marry while in service. After retirement, they could marry but their children were not allowed to serve in the Janissary Corp. These were at the service of the sultan. The sultan exercised supreme power. The Grand Vizir controlled the routine operation of the empire.

Religious officials (Ulamas) served in the judiciary and oftentimes legalized the official policies. They drew a salary from the sultan but also benefited from land grants (waqfs) that they managed. Centers of learning such as al-Azhar in Cairo, Zaytuna in Tunis and al-Qarawiyyin in Fez produced Arab-speaking Ulamas.

An elaborate system of government developed using an effective bureaucracy (this word had a positive connotation) to rule the vast empire and keep track of tax collection. The system of government was based on centralized control over the provinces as much as possible. This was hard to do over far away provinces. Istanbul appointed the commanders of the Janissary Corps while other officers were locals of Ottoman descent. By the end of the sixteenth century, these lower officers revolted against the centralized rule of Istanbul, and chose a local governor (a Dey) that was also recognized by the sultan. Below him, the Bey commanded the Janissary Corps, collected taxes and shared in the power.

There were three forms of taxes: a tax on farm produce, a tax on trade and marketplace and a personal poll tax that non-Muslims paid in order to be authorized to travel. In addition, levies were occasionally imposed to fund unusual projects (such as military campaigns).

HEIGHT OF THE OTTOMAN DYNASTY

In the Red Sea, the Ottomans strived to prevent Portuguese influence in the sixteenth century while in the Mediterranean Sea they dominated the eastern part and were effective at disturbing Spanish commerce in the western part. Ottoman strongholds were the ports of Algiers, Tripoli (in Libya) and later on Tunis. Algiers hosted the greatest Ottoman naval force as well as the largest Janissary Corps (outside of Istanbul). The Barbary pirates operating out of Algiers raided European merchant ships. From the sixteenth century, the city of Wahran was under Spanish control; it was the westernmost

limit of Ottoman influence. The Spanish however controlled only small enclaves on the Moroccan coast to prevent the Ottoman naval power from extending to the Atlantic. From 1580, Spain and the Ottomans were at peace with each other. Portuguese and Dutch trade encroachments increased in the Persian Gulf.

Cairo had the monopoly over the spice trade till the seventeenth century when the Dutch diverted the trade route southward around the Cape of Good Hope. The Saffavid Empire supplied Persian silk through Iraq, Syria and Anatolia. Armenians played an important role in this trade. Coffee was imported from Yemen to Cairo and then to the coffee shops of the major cities of the Ottoman Empire. The entire population under Ottoman rule was around 25 million people. The population of Spain at that time was a third that size. The city of Istanbul had grown to 700,000 and the city of Cairo had 300,000 people by the seventeenth century. The relatively young city of Algiers which was created by the Ottomans was pushing 100,000. The city of Baghdad never recovered after the Mongol invasion. Cities started losing their defensive walls owing to the long period of peace in the region and since walls had become useless against artillery cannons.

Much of the Sephardic Jewish population that had been expelled from Spain under the inquisition had settled in North Africa as well as in Istanbul. They were involved in money lending to the various levels of the Ottoman government and as dealers in precious metals.

LIST OF THE OTTOMAN SULTANS

A list of the Ottoman sultans follows. Some of them were also called khalifs.

Mehmed II, 1451-1481
Beyazid II, 1481-1512
Selim I, 1512-1520
Suleiman the Magnificent, 1520-1566
Selim II, 1566-1574
Murad III, 1574-1595
Mehmed III, 1595-1603
Ahmed I, 1603-1617
Mustafa I (First Time), 1617-1618
Osman II, 1618-1622
Mustafa I (Second Time), 1622-1623
Murad IV, 1623-1640
Ibrahim I, 1640-1648
Mehmed IV, 1648-1687
Suleiman II, 1687-1691
Ahmed II, 1691-1695
Mustafa II, 1695-1703
Ahmed III, 1703-1730
Mahmud I, 1730-1754
Osman III, 1754-1757

Mustafa III, 1757-1774
Abd-ul-Hamid I, 1774-1789
Selim III, 1789-1807
Mustafa IV, 1807-1808
Mahmud II, 1808-1839
Abd-ul-Mejid I, 1839-1861
Abd-ul-Aziz, 1861-1876
Murad V, 1876
Abd-ul-Hamid II, 1876-1909

Chapter 14: THE GROWTH OF EUROPEAN MARITIME POWERS

DECLINE OF THE GUNPOWDER EMPIRES

In the western part of Arabia, the Ottoman governor focused his efforts on the holy cities of Mekka and Medina especially during the period of annual pilgrimage. The routine operation of these cities was left to local Arab families of noble descent. The Ottomans were in charge of the major pilgrim caravans coming from Cairo and Damascus. Pilgrims would make their way to one of these cities to join one of the two official caravans sponsored by the Ottoman sultan. Tens of thousands of pilgrims performed the pilgrimage each year.

The Ottomans gave up on far away provinces such as the southern coast of Arabia. Their presence was inexistent even on port cities such as in Yemen where the coffee trade was bustling. The Ibadi merchants of Oman controlled trade along the East African coast. Bahrain was under the influence of the Saffavids of Iran. The Persian Gulf was heavily Shia.

In Morocco, the Sadid dynasty was not able to establish unity and rule for more than a century. They were replaced by the Alawi dynasty which unified Morocco and will last till modern times.

It was getting harder for the Ottomans to keep the large empire under control. By the early seventeenth century, discontent led to uprisings by the Janissaries, public servants and merchants which led to the replacement of sultan Mustapha II.

By the eighteenth century, the power to rule was in the hands of local governors (Deys). The Deys were still recognized by the sultan in Istanbul whose power was diminished substantially. The Janissaries formed a self perpetrating class of soldiers, merchants and artisans. Taxes were collected and used locally. Global maritime commerce increased. For instance, hides from North Africa and cotton from Anatolia made it to the port of Marseille in southern France.

THREATS FROM EUROPEAN POWERS

At the end of the seventeenth century, Russia started advancing southwards to the Black Sea region. Their allies, the Cossacks raided the Caucasus region. The Ottomans still controlled the Danube River up to Hungary. Russia occupied the Crimea, a Muslim land indirectly ruled by the Ottomans. The Russian fleet became a threat to the Ottomans in the Eastern Mediterranean.

By the seventeenth century, power moved from the Mediterranean Sea to the Atlantic Ocean with increasing trade around the Cape of Good Hope and with the Americas. Spanish and Portuguese, then Dutch ships were larger and better suited to withstand the rougher sailing of the Atlantic. This put the naval power of the Ottomans at a disadvantage. The European maritime powers were asserting their presence in the

Americas, along the coast of Africa and in the southern and southeastern coast of Asia. They were bringing new crops previously unknown in some regions and by now had the monopoly over the spice trade between Asia and Europe. The rise of European powers due to their technological advances coincided with the decline of the Ottomans caused by many factors including the loss of central authority and the failure to adapt. For example, the printing press had been in use in Europe since the sixteenth century but was not adopted in the Ottoman Empire for another couple of centuries. Warfare technology had also changed substantially.

The introduction of quarantine helped limit the destructive effect of the plague. The introduction of new crops, such as maize from the new world, helped decrease famine. This helped bring about an unprecedented population growth. The industrial revolution was affecting much progress in Europe. All of these advances helped European naval powers establish trading posts.

By the eighteenth century, European powers were not only controlling trade but setting up colonies. Spanish and Portuguese colonies had been established in the Americas and on the coast of Africa. The Spanish were also controlling the Philippines. A Dutch colony was established in Indonesia and the British started their presence in India. The colonies abroad were bringing raw materials and great wealth. European factories were turning out manufactured goods on a larger scale. The Netherlands, England and then France also became colonial powers.

REVIVALIST AND REFORM MOVEMENTS

A movement of discontent and the desire for change started being felt all throughout the Islamic world. The era of imperial Islam was over; it was time for the era of revivalism. Religious leaders were pushing for a return to the source of the early days of pristine Islam. For example, a movement was started in Arabia by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703-1792) to fight the corrupt rulers and clean up the holy sites. He was using the same ideas that Ibn Taymiyya had put forward in order to rally the Islamic masses in the aftermath of the Mongol invasion in the thirteenth century. These were also the same arguments that Ibn Hanbal had used against the philosophers in the ninth century. Return to the strict interpretation of the basic Islamic teachings, condemnation of saint worship and superstition and denunciation of extreme wealth and power in the hands of rulers were some of these ideas. Ibn Abd al-Wahhab allied himself with Muhammad ibn Saud, the leader of an Arabian tribe to take over power from the Ottomans and establish a state in Arabia comprising the holy sites of Mekka and Medina and extending all the way to Iraq. This will become the Wahhabi movement. Other similar Jihad movements sprang in Africa in the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries such as those led by Uthman Dan Folio in Nigeria (1754-1817), by the Grand Sanusi in Libya (1787-1859), and by the Mahdi in Sudan (1848-1885). In India, a similar movement was led by Shah Wali Allah of Delhi (1702-1762). All these leaders got educated in Mekka then took back to their countries the determination to fight their rulers and resist the growing European threat.

Chapter 15: THE ERA OF EUROPEAN COLONIALISM

CHANGE AND CHALLENGES

The industrial revolution and the subsequent strengthening of the industrial, economic and military power of European nations brought serious challenges to the Islamic societies. This situation was helped by large scale factory production in Europe as well as the advent of steamships and railways. The telegraph helped with better communications. On the other hand, Islamic societies were still in a state of technological slumber.

Internal weakness and the compelling need to adapt in the Muslim lands and the continued external threat of European colonialism created an environment favorable for religious activism. Many movements started such as the forerunners of the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt and the Jamaat I-Islami in the Indian subcontinent. Charismatic leaders such as the Afghani Jamal Addin al-Afghani, the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh, and the Syrian Rashid Rida were challenging the status-quo. Jamal Addin al-Afghani (1838-1897) preached a message of Islamic reform to include some of the European ideas without dismissing the solid basis of Islamic teachings. He strived to reconcile Islam and modern science. He acquired wide following in many countries (Afghanistan, Egypt, Anatolia, Persia, India, etc) and will be the remembered as the father of the reformist movement in the Islamic lands. Al-Afghani's ideas were furthered by Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida. Abduh became a highly respected member of the Ulamas in al-Azhar University in Cairo.

In the Indian subcontinent, Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) and Muhammad Iqbal (1875-1938) were putting forth novel ideas. A debate contrasting the traditional ways and modernism was taking place. Passive interpretations (taqlid) were condemned. Sayyid Ahmad Khan organized a popular uprising in 1857 which was an excuse for the British occupation of India. Both Muslims and Hindus participated but the British held the Muslims responsible. This ended the Muslim rule of India. Muhammad Iqbal's western training at the University of Cambridge in England as a lawyer gave him the ability to synthesize Islamic concepts with western modernism. He urged Islamic societies to get out of their state of slumber that had lasted for many centuries and urged the creation of Islamic democracies.

The Ulamas who were in charge of legal aspects up to then were challenged by new legal codes and court systems borrowed from Europe. Sufism stepped in to fill the identity vacuum of the Muslim masses. The Sanusiya in Libya and the Tijania in Algeria were formed around 1860. All of these movements were effervescing with ideas and provided arguments for new interpretations (ijtihad) of the Islamic teachings. Old "philosophers" ideas based on rational thinking (such as those of the Mutazila) resurfaced.

The African and Asian coasts were accustomed with Spanish and Portuguese presence since the sixteenth century. The Dutch were also present as far as the Indian Ocean and

Southeast Asia (in Indonesia) since the eighteenth century. England and France also became dominating colonial powers in the eighteenth century. The slave trade had been going on since the early settlement of the new world (the Americas) in the sixteenth century. The weakened Ottoman Empire tried to adjust by adopting European military and administrative ways. For example, sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) attempted to modernize the Ottoman military by hiring European instructors. But this effort was too little too late.

COLONIALIZATION

France occupied Algeria (which was under Ottoman rule) starting from 1830. A resistance movement led by Abd al-Qadir in Western Algeria was no match for the European military might. The capture of Abd al-Qadir in 1847 ended this movement. European settlers from France and Spain built a network of villages (and gave them French names) in the rich agricultural lands of Algeria along with an infrastructure of roads and railways. They were settling down to stay for good. Algerians (both Arabs and Berbers) lost most of their best land and became laborers. By 1860, the European population of Algeria became 200,000 while the indigenous population was around 3 million people. In time, Tunisia will become a French protectorate in 1881 and Morocco will also fall under French rule some 30 years later. Egypt was occupied by the British. Egypt was first invaded by the Napoleonic troops at the end of the eighteenth century, then by Britain in the nineteenth century. The British Empire was keen on controlling a large swath of Africa from the Cape (in South Africa) to Cairo (in Egypt). A sporadic resistance attempt was led by a Turk named Muhammad Ali who was able to take over power and became the governor of Egypt. He expanded into Sudan, Syria and Arabia, but was forced to withdraw by the British. He was kept in power by the British but under check. The Treaty of Paris in 1856 shifted the balance of power between Europe and what little influence was left of the Ottoman Empire.

Europe was experiencing an economic boom with cheap raw materials coming from the colonies and a monopoly over world-wide trade. The population of England increased to 27 million people by 1860. The population of Egypt was around 5.5 million. London became the largest city in the world with 2.5 million inhabitants in 1850. Egyptian cotton was feeding textile factories in Manchester and Liverpool. England occupied the port of Aden in Yemen in 1833 in order to control the steamship trade from India and assert its presence in the region.

France helped Egypt build the Suez Canal between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. This project was completed in 1869 with no Ottoman involvement. This major trade thoroughfare attracted the British who were competing with the French for the colonization of the continent of Africa. France focused on North Africa and left Egypt to the British. The British extended their control to the Sudan.

SLOW DECAY OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire lost North Africa to colonial powers. Moreover, most of its European provinces (in the Balkans for example) were also lost following strong Russian influence and internal uprising movements. Serb and Greek uprisings against the Ottoman rule led to the establishment of the nation of Serbia in 1830 and of the kingdom of Greece in 1833. Russia expanded southwards into the lands of the Caucasus inhabited by Muslim majorities and ruled by local sultans under Ottoman protection. England and France helped the Ottomans against Russia during the Crimea War (1853-1856). This was a struggle between European powers for control over Ottoman territories. The Crimea War was ended with a peace treaty. Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire in 1877. Russian troops marched toward Istanbul. The Ottomans were compelled to sign a peace treaty which gave autonomy to the Bulgarian territories. The Island of Crete was also given autonomy in 1899 and later incorporated into Greece. The Ottomans lost much of their influence but were able to keep their homeland (present day Turkey) free from European rule while the rest of the Islamic world fell to European colonialism.

Western Arabia was the only Islamic province not to be colonized. The Eastern part including Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait went voluntarily under British rule. Loss of revenue from the lost provinces forced the Ottomans to borrow a great deal of money from European banks (newly innovated institutions) during the second half of the nineteenth century. The Ottomans were unable to carry the burden of their debt and in 1881 a European institution was created to administer most of the Ottoman revenues directly. In the mist of all of these crises for the Ottomans, a new constitution was drafted in Istanbul and a democratic parliament was formed in 1876. The new sultan Abdul Hamid II (1876-1909), however, suspended this process.

Technological advances in Europe were also reaching the Islamic world. Mass printing in Arabic as well as the advent of newspapers appeared around 1870 in the Middle East. Sultan Abdul Hamid had a railroad constructed in the Hijaz (Arabia) to transport pilgrims to Mekka.

By the turn of the nineteenth century, France was controlling most of North Africa (Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco soon to come) and parts of the Middle East (Lebanon and parts of Syria). Spain had extended its control over the Spanish Sahara (Rio de Oro) south of Morocco besides its two enclaves in the northern coast (Ceuta and Melilla). England was controlling Egypt and Sudan. Western Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Syria as well as Anatolia were still under Ottoman control.

Chapter 16: THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

COLONIAL RULE

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Algeria and Tunisia were under French rule. Up to one third of the land was controlled by the colon settlers. Morocco was the object of competition between Spain and France for a while; then in 1912 France occupied most of Morocco while Spain kept the two small enclave ports on the Mediterranean coast and the Spanish Sahara to the south. The European population of Algeria (mostly French and Spanish) was pushing 750,000 by 1914 while the indigenous population was almost 5 million people. Most of the population of the capital Algiers was European. The Jewish inhabitants of Algeria were given French citizenship. The Arab/Berber inhabitants were not given that privilege. The number of Algerians with a high school education was very small. An even smaller number of Algerians went to college. They were not encouraged to attend the sole university in Algeria (the University of Algiers). Extensive mechanized cultivation of orange orchards was undertaken in North Africa for export to Europe.

The European culture had major impact in the Muslim lands. Muslims started imitating European ways of living even in their dress. The population of cities and their alluring amenities (such as new buildings, schools, hospitals and modern means of transportation) increased. In Cairo, the Egyptian elite could enjoy a play at the Opera House.

In Turkey, it was becoming clear that the Ottoman Empire had to be abolished and replaced by a democracy similar to those in Europe.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

The First World War broke out in 1914 triggered by enmity between Austria and Russia in the Balkans. England and France sided with Russia while Germany sided with Austria. The weakened Ottoman Empire took side with Germany and Austria against Russia since Russia had taken lots of the Balkan territories from the Ottomans during the nineteenth century. Most of the First World War played out in Europe but affected the Middle East in a drastic way. Egypt was still under British control and part of the Middle East was still under Ottoman rule. The British army eliminated Ottoman presence in Arabia. An allied force (British and French) advanced and occupied Palestine and Syria thereby kicking the Ottomans out. The British ended up controlling Palestine while the French controlled Lebanon and Syria. A British force (with help from Indian troops) controlled the Persian Gulf coast and occupied Iraq.

The Ottoman Empire lost all of its Arab territories by the end of the First World War in 1918. The victorious allied forces divided most of the Ottoman territories and imposed tight constraints on the Ottoman sultan in the Treaty of Sevres in 1920. The only Muslim nations that emerged from the First World War not under European colonial rule were Turkey itself and Iran. Strong popular uprisings and discontent of the Turkish masses led by army officers helped bring an end to the sultanate and establish the Republic of Turkey under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938). The new republic

would draft a constitution that separated religion and state and made conscious efforts to move away from the Middle East culture and closer to secular Europe.

THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

In North Africa, the Algerian and Tunisian troops that had fought with French forces in the First World War called for changes and improvement of the conditions of the indigenous population.

In Arabia, a member of the Hashemite family raised an Arab indigenous force and fought with the Allied Forces against the Ottomans. They helped in the takeover of Palestine and Syria. After the war, the Hashemite family will supply kings for Saudi Arabia, Transjordan (nowadays known as Jordan), and Iraq.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the First Zionist Congress had been formed and Jewish immigration to Palestine had started. By 1914, the Jewish population constituted 12 % of the total population. In 1917, the declaration of Balfour established the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine under British control. In 1922, the newly created League of Nations decreed that Britain would be responsible for Iraq and Palestine and France for Syria and Lebanon.

The discovery of oil in the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Arabia and Bahrain) and later in the Sahara Desert (Algeria) was extra incentive for Britain and France to increase their involvement in (and control of) the region. Pipelines were carrying oil to ports on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. The Suez Canal under British control was crucial for oil shipments from the Middle East to the Mediterranean and provided the quickest route to India and other British colonies.

The British mandate for Palestine encouraged the creation of two separate states (Israel and Palestine). This, however, never materialized. Israel attracted Jewish immigration from North Africa (Sephardic Jews) and from Eastern Europe (Ashkenazi Jews). Kibbutz farms were established on newly acquired Palestinian lands. The Hebrew language was revived and became the official language of Israel.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE

Despite the lack of opportunities under colonialism, many North Africans made their way to Europe and received a Western education. These will turn out to be the leaders of the various resistance movements against foreign rule in their homelands. In Egypt, girls were admitted to public schools for the first time. This period between the two world wars saw the start of an awakening of the Arab and Muslim populations from a long slumber. The former reform movements in the Middle East gave rise to nationalist movements. Ben Badis and Messali Hadj in Algeria, Bourguiba and the Destour party in Tunisia, the Wafd party and the Muslim Brotherhood (initiated by Hasan al-Banna) in Egypt, Mawlana Mawdudi's Islamic Society party (Jamaat I-Islami) in the Indian subcontinent would all begin to mobilize the masses. In 1922, the British mandate of

Egypt was ended. The British would keep control over the Suez Canal and keep their interference. Zaghlul, the leader of the Wafd party became the first prime minister of Egypt. In 1930, Iraq was given its independence and King Faysal (a member of the Hashemite family) was placed as the first ruler by the British. For a few months, the socialist Popular Front Party gained power in France in 1936. This government negotiated treaties giving limited autonomy to Syria and Lebanon.

Improvements in living standards, advances in sanitation and public health (such as vaccination) increased life expectancy in the Arab world. Mass exodus from villages ravaged by epidemics to towns and their amenities fueled this growth. The population of Egypt tripled between the two world wars and was pushing 16 million by 1939. The population of the Arab world was around 60 million. In Morocco, the city of Casablanca became the largest city in North Africa. Enhancements of the mass media (newspapers and radio) helped a global Arab culture develop especially in large cities. Egyptian singers and movie stars became popular all across the Arab world. The great singer Umm Kulthum connected with the masses by singing the verses of the Qur'an. Famous Egyptian thinkers and poets such as Taha Hussein and Ahmed Shawqi would resonate throughout the Arab world. There was a push for the emancipation of Muslim women who were becoming more educated and could compare their plight to European women. Huda Sharawi made history when she removed her veil in a train station in Cairo in 1923.

The peoples of the Middle East made effective use of the Western culture by learning its languages (English and French) and attending its schools while Europeans made no efforts at learning the Arabic language or understanding the Islamic culture. There was a genuine clash of civilizations which made it clear that European colonization of the region (Middle East and North Africa) would not last.

WORLD WAR II

In 1940 France was defeated by the Germans and officially lost the war. A French resistance movement led by Charles de Gaulle was started from England. In 1942, the allied troops led by the United States landed in Normandy and liberated France. American troops also landed in North Africa (Morocco and Algeria) and kept German troops from occupying North Africa. British troops led by Montgomery defeated German troops led by Rommel in the deserts of Egypt in Libya. In 1941, Iraq and then Syria were occupied by British troops who restored friendly governments. Iran was occupied briefly by British and Soviet troops. British troops covered a territory that stretched from Morocco to Indochina. At the end of the war, Italy (which was on the German side) lost control of Libya to the British and the French.

World War II (1939-1945) changed the balance of power. It saw the emergence of the United Sates and the Soviet Union as world superpowers. It also brought about a wave of liberation movements that ended the colonization of the region within a couple of decades.

LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

When the United Nations organization was formed in 1945, the independent Arab nations joined as members. In 1949, the United Nations passed a resolution supporting the independence of colonized nations.

The United States encouraged the creation of a Jewish state in Israel. The Jewish settlers organized an uprising against British rule. Palestine which was under the British mandate was turned over to the United Nations. An independent Jewish state of Israel was declared in 1947. Palestinian Arabs lost their land and became refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. Jewish immigration to Israel from the Middle East, North Africa, East Africa and Eastern Europe increased. Jerusalem was divided between Israel and Jordan.

The conference of Cairo in 1945 created the League of Arab States that included Egypt, Lebanon, Transjordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. In 1951, serious fighting broke out between British forces and Egyptian guerillas and was followed by massive popular uprisings. In 1952, Britain withdrew and Egypt emerged as an independent nation under the leadership of Jamal Abd al-Naser who set out to unify the Arab world. A formal union of Arab nations that included Egypt, Syria and Jordan was formed for a while (1958-1961). Wars between Arab states and Israel were fought in 1948 and 1956. The British controlled the Suez Canal until 1956 when it was nationalized by Abd al-Naser.

The British withdrew from India which became an independent state in 1947 under the leadership of Nehru. A civil war between Hindus and Muslims forced the partition of India and the creation of the nation of Pakistan (under the leadership of Ali Jinnah and his Muslim League Party) for the Muslim population in the north. Pakistan consisted of two far flung provinces (present day Pakistan and Bangladesh) that were not contiguous. These will become separate countries in 1971.

Popular uprising in eastern provinces of Algeria in 1945 were followed by brutal repression by the French colonial power. Tens of thousands of Algerians were massacred. France was keeping the Maghrib but had to leave Syria and Lebanon. In 1951, Libya became independent under the Sanusi King Idris.

WAVE OF INDEPENDENCE

France's defeat at World War II, then during the Indochina war (in the early fifties) weakened its position in the North African colonies. Nationalist movements pushed for independence. Al all-out war of liberation started in Algeria in 1954. France decided to let go of Morocco and Tunisia but hold on to Algeria along with most of the Sahara Desert (which was rich in oil and natural gas reserves). Both Morocco and Tunisia became independent nations in 1956. King Mohammad V became the ruler of Morocco and Bourguiba became the first president of Tunisia. Most of the European settlers of Morocco and Tunisia left to go back to France.

The discovery of oil in the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Kuwait) brought major involvement of American companies along with the British ones. A movement of non-aligned nations was formed by India's first president Nehru and included most of the oil-producing formerly colonized countries. These nations wanted to stay outside of the influence of the two superpowers (the United States and the Soviet Union).

In early sixties, power was seized by a group of military officers in Iraq and a military coup took place in Syria. Both countries would remain military dictatorships for a long time. The nationalist Baath party had strong influence in politics in both countries.

The Algerian war of independence was brutal due to the stubborn policy of France to hold on to that colony at any cost because of its richness in oil in the Sahara Desert. 600,000 French troops were stationed in Algeria (most of them were conscripts). The pressure for change brought General de Gaulle (the World War II liberator of France) into power as president of the Fifth Republic in 1958. De Gaulle at first tried to crush the revolution but could not. On the contrary, it was intensifying. France did not have a choice but to pull out of Algeria which became an independent nation in 1962. Algeria had been under French rule for 132 years (1830-1962). Over one million Algerians had lost their lives during the war of independence (1954-1962). The population of Algeria was 12 million people at the time of its independence.

THE POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA

Many non-aligned countries sought help from the Soviet Union and leaned toward socialism against American and European "imperialism". Oil producing nations of the Middle East joined the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and started controlling the production and price of oil. This sent the price of oil soaring in the seventies.

The Six-Day war in 1967 saw the defeat of the Arab nations led by Egypt (under Abd al-Naser) against Israel. Israel's pre-emptive strike against Egyptian airplanes destroyed them on the ground. With no air cover, the Arab nations (Iraq, Jordan, Syria mostly) lost the war and plenty of territory. This was also a defeat for the Soviet Union which supported the Arabs against the United States which supported Israel. The Sinai desert and the Gaza strip were lost by Egypt, the West Bank was lost by Jordan and the Golan Heights were lost by Syria. Israel occupied these new territories and controlled their Palestinian population. East Jerusalem became part of Israel. Another war between Egypt and Israel in 1973 also ended up with the defeat of Egypt. Egyptian troops were able to cross the Suez Canal and penetrate into the Sinai desert. The air superiority of US-made planes helped Israel destroy entire Soviet-made tank divisions. This defeat convinced the Egyptians to scale back their strong relations with the Soviet Union and move closer to the US. The Egyptian president As-Sadat will end up making peace with Israel for the return of the Sinai desert to Egypt, but will end up getting assassinated by members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

The two provinces of Pakistan could not stay united due to their remoteness and split into Pakistan for the western part and Bangladesh for the eastern part in 1971. The president of Pakistan Ali Bhutto would get assassinated by Islamist extremists.

In one form or another, all formerly colonized nations achieved their independence. The ruling elite in these nations tended to be western educated and followed western ways of governing. After a generation or so, the masses aspired for a return to their cultural values. All along, they had stayed Muslim but had acquired western tastes and living standards. Political opposition of Muslim activists became strong in some countries such as Egypt, Sudan, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia and Algeria. An Islamic revolution toppled the Shah of Iran and established an Islamic Republic in 1979. Islamic resistance movements sprang in most countries against corrupt governments. Islamists arrived to power by getting democratically elected in Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and even Turkey.

THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Year 1979 saw the development of a series of events in the Middle East with long-lasting ramifications in the Islamic world. The Iranian revolution took place whereby Ayatollah Khomeini took power from the Shah of Iran following massive popular uprising. The United States stopped its diplomatic relations with Iran. The brutal dictator Saddam Hussein took over power in Iraq following a military coup. The United States ended up invading Iraq twice over the next 25 years. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan led to a resistance movement supported by Pakistan and the United States. The ultimate pullout of Soviet troops left a vacuum which led to a civil war and the arrival of the extremist Taliban government to power. These applied a strict version of the Sharia Islamic law which was detrimental to democracy and basic rights. The United States ended up invading Afghanistan after the 9/11 attack of Islamic extremists on American soil.

The end of communism in Eastern Europe led to the break up of the Soviet Union. A number of former soviet republics with Muslim population such as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan ended up as sovereign nations in the Caucasus while other regions with majority Muslim population remained part of Russia such as Dagestan and Chechnya.

Islamist fundamentalist movements sprang up all over the world in hot spots where Muslims were either in the minority or under oppression. Examples include Kashmir, Bosnia, Chechnya, Algeria, Congo as well as other countries of West Africa, Ethiopia, etc. Corrupt governments throughout the third world did not help the situation and increased the resentment of the masses. In the Arab world, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Morocco remained as monarchies with old fashion kings ruling for life. Other countries like Egypt and Syria are governed by “presidents” who stay in power for life with no chance for genuine change. Genuine democracy has not taken roots in most Arab countries.

The Taliban government in Afghanistan allied itself with the extremist organization al-Qaida that recruited Arab jihadis from all over the Arab world under the leadership of

Usama Bin Laden. Al-Qaida was behind the attack on the United States in 9/11/01 whereby four commercial planes were high-jacked and crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC (another plane crashed in Pennsylvania). This date will end up being a defining moment in the history of the United States.

The Palestinian "problem" has been festering for decades and fueling resentment among Muslims throughout the world. The United Nations passed resolutions in favor of a two-state solution with Israel and Palestine as sovereign nations existing side by side. This, however, has not materialized. Palestinian refugees have been living in segregated camps in Lebanon since the late forties. Israeli military intervention during the Lebanese civil war in the seventies sent the Fatah leadership (under Yasser Arafat) into exile in Tunisia. A negotiated peace effort led by President Clinton in the nineties led to some autonomy to the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza under the leadership of the Fatah party. Islamic radical movements like Hamas in Gaza and Islamic Jihad in Lebanon are thriving in this atmosphere of enmity. Their terrorist tactics (such as suicide bombings) against Israeli citizens and Israel's heavy-handed response have worsened the situation. With no prospect for genuine peace, Hamas became very popular among Palestinians and won democratic elections in Gaza in 2007.

THE RECENT ARAB SPRINGS

The twenty first century started with a roar with the 9/11/01 terrorist attack on the US. Islam and Muslims were in the news in a negative way. This dragged the US in unwanted and long-lasting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Terrorist movements like the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan and the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria spawned similar movements in the world like Boko Haram in Nigeria, Abu Sayyaf in southeast Asia and the Shabab group in the horn of Africa.

Some newly independent nations were developing economically while others were stagnating in mismanagement and corruption under the heavy hand of dictators. The hopes of the masses were dashed in many nations including Arab and Islamic nations.

The Arab Spring of 2011 was started in Tunisia (as the Jasmin revolution) by a young desperate man who was trying to make a living by selling vegetables on the street. The state police stopped him from providing for his family. In a state of desperation, he put himself on fire. This started the Tunisian Arab Spring massive popular uprising which led to the resignation and flight of the dictator (President Ben Ali) who had been controlling Tunisia for many decades with the help of the military. Another Arab Spring movement in Egypt led to the stepping down of their dictator which led to a democratic opening which did not last. A military dictator took over power right away and resumed the brutal means against the people. The Syrian people rise up against their dictator but this movement led to a messy civil war that put that country in an absolute mess. The same thing happened in Libya and Yemen. The Arab Springs turned into Arab nightmares for the people.

Chapter 17: SPECIAL TOPICS

MINORITIES AND WOMEN

Religious minorities (such as Christians and Jews) received the official status of "protected minorities" under Islamic rule throughout history. This allowed them to live and sometime prosper unharmed. This does not compare with the rights of minorities in modern democracies but was an improvement over preceding civilizations in history. These minorities would attain full rights upon conversation to Islam. This was an appealing incentive and worked well during the early times of the Islamic civilization (under the Abbasids for example). Their children would enjoy full citizenship. The population of the Fertile Crescent was 10 % Muslims during the Ummayads and increased to majority Muslims over a period of two centuries.

Even though the rights of women were spelled out in the Quran, women in general received an unfair treatment in Islamic history. The institution of the veiling of women early on relegated their plight to seclusion and out of public life. They were excluded from positions of power and authority in a male-dominated society. Women have yet to achieve their full rights in Islamic societies even in modern times. However, some Muslim women have made great progress. In western societies, they have accomplished greatly and have demonstrated leadership in many fields. Even in Muslim countries, women have risen to top leadership position despite the lack of opportunities. Women have served as heads of state in Muslim countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Turkey while this has not happened yet in the US or in Western Europe.

ISLAM AND THE WEST

The first encounter between Islamic societies and the West was during the crusades. It was brutal and scarred the Islamic psyche. Crusaders massacred what was left of the Muslim populations of Jerusalem. When Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi troops took over Jerusalem a century later, they acted with restraint and chivalry. The Spanish inquisition forced the remaining Muslim population of Southern Spain to either convert or else. This was the case for the Jewish population of Spain as well. Both ended up leaving to settle in North Africa. Some Sephardic Jews who left Spain settled in Istanbul as well. Their descendents still speak Spanish to the present day.

The second encounter between the West and the Islamic civilization was during the era of European colonization. European powers colonized most of the Islamic lands in North Africa, the Middle East and Asia. This lasted for a couple of centuries in which Muslims experienced the humiliation of foreign rule and occupation. Their faith was de-emphasized and their culture was banished. This was painful, but brought about resiliency and a form of awakening, reform and nationalistic movements. Hardship forced the Islamic masses into the modern age and familiarized them with its technological advantages.

MUSLIMS IN THE WEST

Muslims acquired western cultures during the era of colonization. After the independence of their nations, a great number of Muslims immigrated to western countries and established themselves and their families. It is not unusual to find second and third generation Muslims in European countries and in North America. The younger Muslims in the West are adapting better than their parents but are losing their heritage fast. It has been said about immigration in general that the second generation loses the language, the third generation loses its culture and the fourth generation lose its faith. Muslims are trying to re-create their comfort space through the establishment of Muslim communities and by building Mosques in Western countries. The openness of western democracies is helping that process.

In the United States, the Muslim population is estimated to be 10 million representing some 3 % of the population. They fall into three broad categories: first generation immigrants, their children and newly converts. Some African Americans accepted Islam wholeheartedly since the mid-twentieth century and the Nation of Islam movement. This was a grassroots movement that was started by Elijah Muhammad who gave African Americans a sense of identity and belonging. Malik al-Shabaz (also known as Malcolm X) galvanized African American fervor during the civil rights era. Divergence of views between the two leaders brought about a split whereby Malik al-Shabaz and Wallace Deen Muhammad (the son of Elijah Muhammad) joined the fold of main stream Sunni belief while Louis Farrakhan succeeded Elijah Muhammad at the head of the old Nation of Islam organization. The Nation of Islam provides a healthy environment and an alternative to a world of drugs and violence in the ghettos of American cities. Islam is thriving in American prisons where African Americans are converting in droves. It gives them a platform for changing around their lives.

MUSLIMS IN THE WORLD

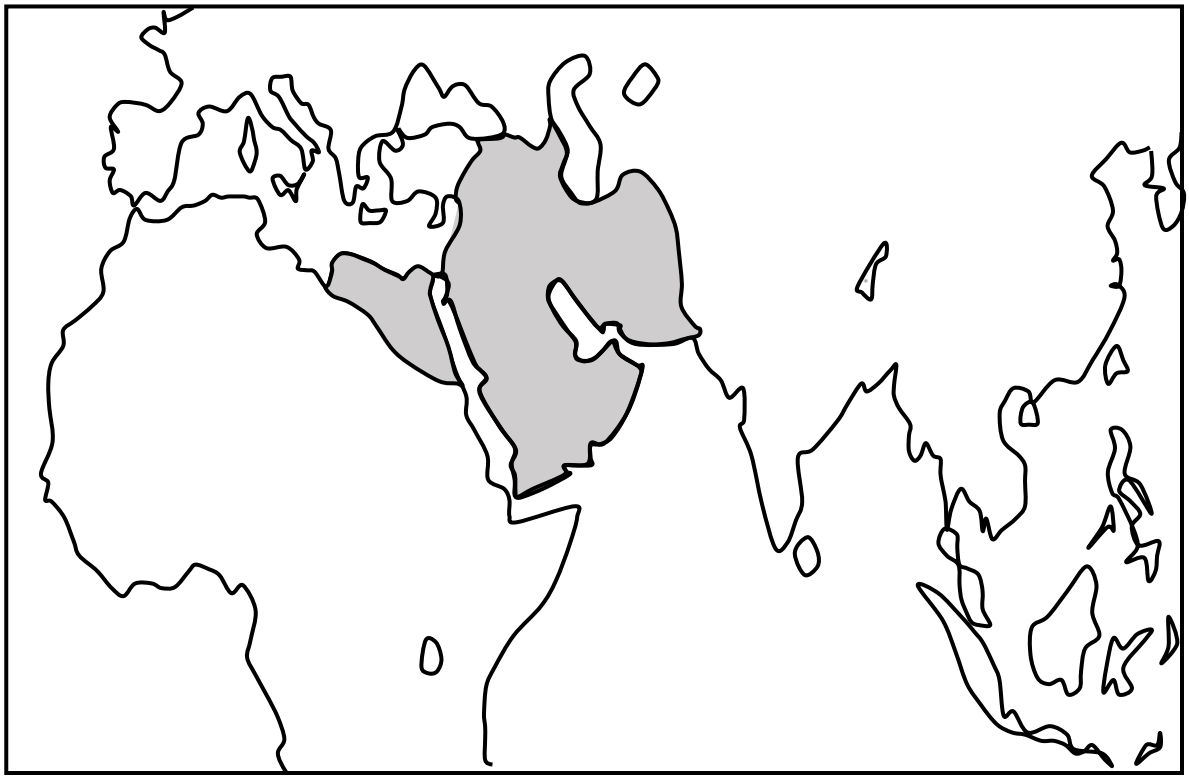
There are some 1.2 billion Muslims in the world. This constitutes 20 % of the world population. Muslims represent a majority of the population in the Arab countries (Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Arab Emirates), in part of Africa (Mali, Niger, Chad, Tanzania, Somalia), in Turkey, in Iran and Afghanistan, in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and in Indonesia. Muslims represent a substantial fraction of the population in some countries of the Caucasus (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan), in Malaysia, and in part of Africa (Kenya, Nigeria). Muslims are a small minority population in western countries (Europe and North America) as well as in some countries of Asia and Africa (such as India and South Africa).

LIST OF ISLAMIC DYNASTIES

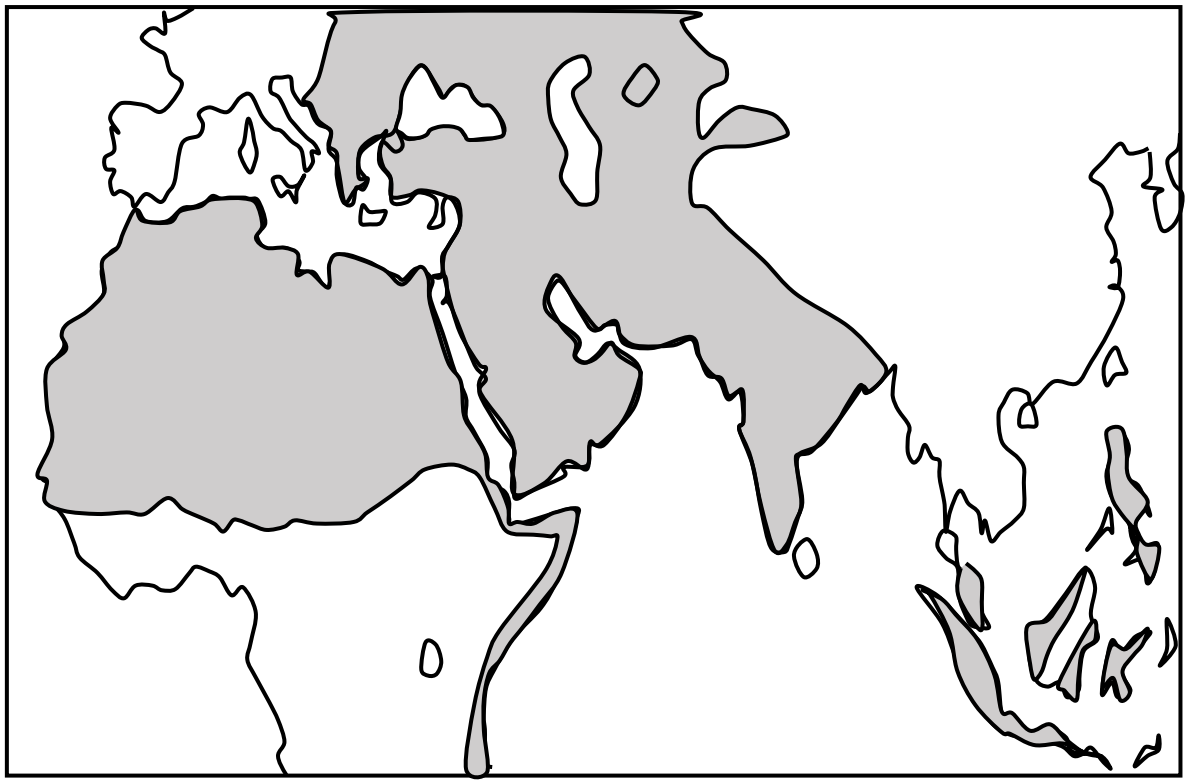
A list of the regional Islamic dynasties is included here in alphabetical order with the relevant dates and regions.

Abbasids, 749-1258, Most of the Islamic world except for Spain
Aghlabids, 800-909 Tunisia, Eastern Algeria, Sicily
Alawis, 1631-present Morocco
Almohads, 1130-1269 Maghrib, Spain
Almoravids, 1056-1147, Maghrib Spain
Ayyubids, 1169-1260 Egypt, Syria, part of Western Arabia
Buyids, 932-1062 Iran, Iraq
Fatimids, 909-1171 Maghrib, Egypt, Syria
Hafsids, 1228-1574, Tunisia, Eastern Algeria
Hashemites of Iraq, 1921-58, Iraq
Idrisids, 789-926, Morocco
Ilkhanids, 1256-1336, Iran, Iraq
Mamluks, 1250-1517, Egypt, Syria
Marinids, 1196-1464, Morocco
Mughals, 1526-1858, India
Muhammad Ali and successors, 1805-1953, Egypt
Muluk al-tawa'if, 11th century, Spain
Nasrids, 1230-1492, Southern Spain
Ottomans, 1281-1922, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Cyprus, Tunisia, Algeria, western Arabia
Rassids, 9th-13th century, end of 16th century-1962, Zaydi Imams of Yemen
Rasulids, 1229-1454, Yemen
Rustamids, 779-909, Western Algeria
Sa'dids, 1511-1628, Morocco
Safavids, 1501-1732, Iran
Saffarids, 867-end of 15th, Eastern Iran
Samanids, 819-1005, North-Eastern Iran, Central Asia
Sa'udis, 1746-today, Central, then Western Arabia
Seljuks, 1038-1194, Iran, Iraq
Seljuks of Rum, 1077-1307, Central and Eastern Turkey
Timurids, 1370-1506, Central Asia, Iran
Tulunids, 868-905, Egypt, Syria
Umayyads, 661-750, Syria, Persia and part of Byzantine territories
Umayyads of Spain, 756-1031, Spain

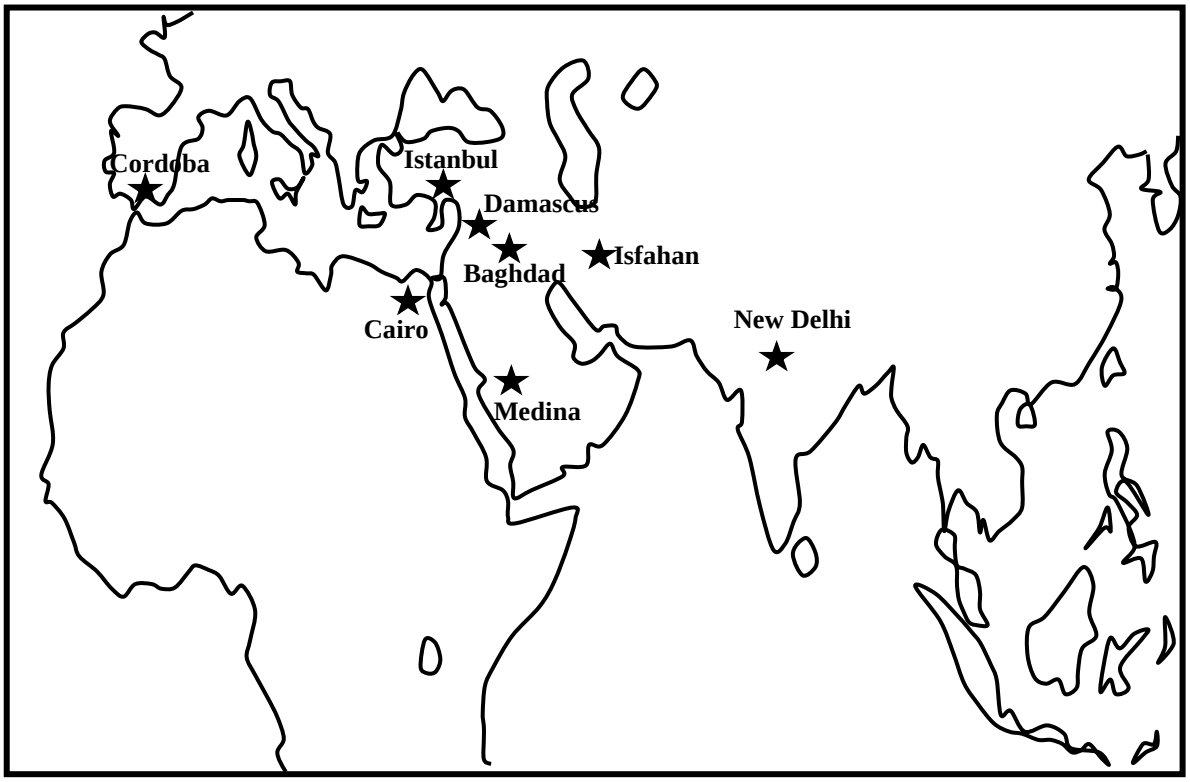
Maps of the Muslim World



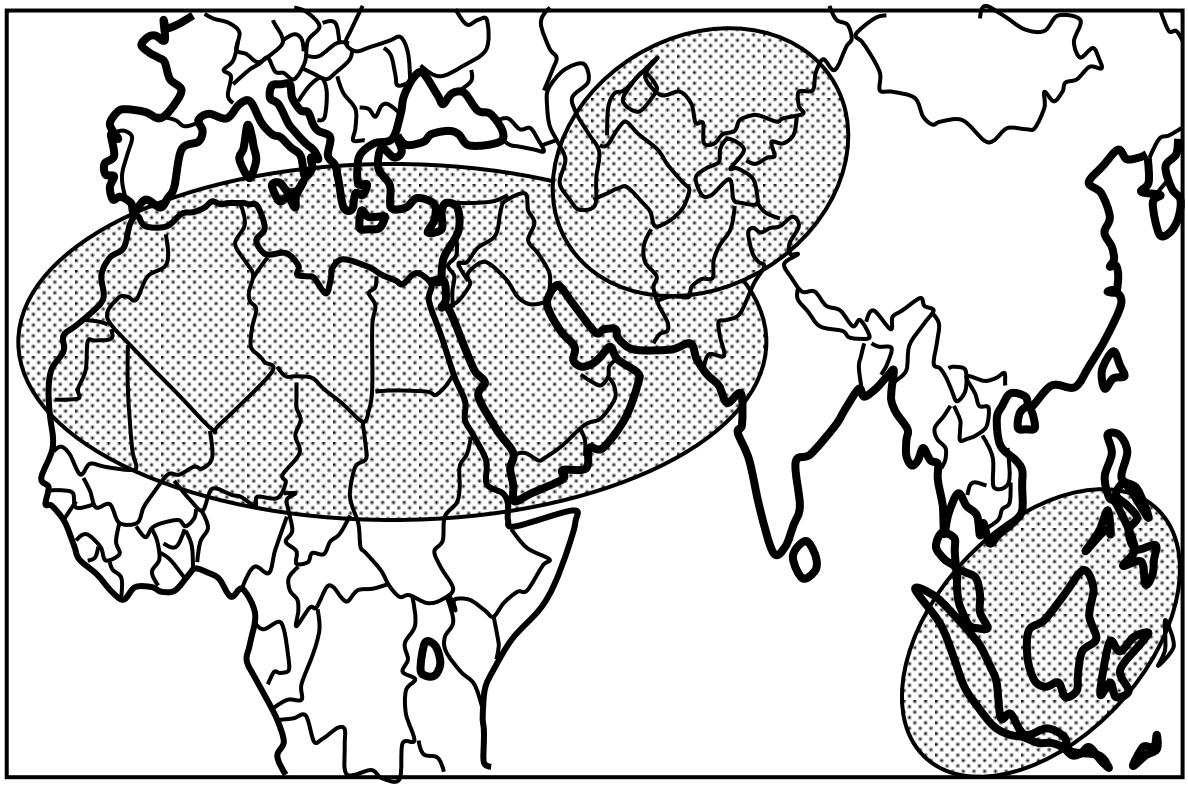
Muslim Lands in 700



Muslim Lands in 1700



Important Capitals in Islamic History



Modern Countries with Majority Muslim Populations

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Photo of the Roman Cathedral of Cordoba, Spain. This was built as a great Mosque that was modified into a Cathedral.



Photo of the gardens (representing paradise) of the Alhambra Palace in Granada, Spain.



Photo of the Dome of the Rock Mosque in Jerusalem.



Photo of the Crusader castle “Krak des Chevaliers” which was built in 1031 in Tripoli on the coast of Lebanon.



Photo of the Great Mosque of Yad built by the Mongols after they converted to Islam.



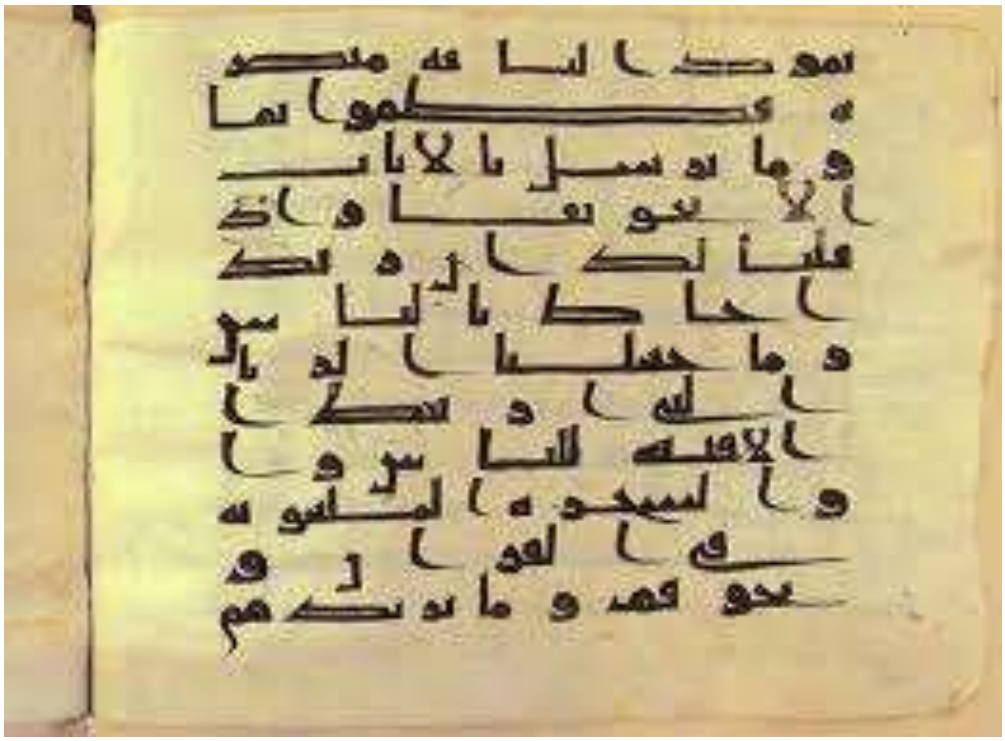
Isfahan mosque



Photo of the Suleymania Mosque in Istanbul.



Photo of the Hagia Sophia Museum in Istanbul. This was once a great church that became a mosque in 1453, then a museum in modern times. This used to be the largest enclosed space in the world.



Copy from the Qur’an compiled during Khalif Uthman